

# Steps to Administering Medications

## Accepting Medications

**Written permission slip** for each medication must include:

- Name of child
- Name of medication
- Dose to be given
- Dates to be given
- Times to be given
- Any special instructions
- Any reactions to watch for
- Parents signature



**Prescribed medication** are in original container. Check for:

- Name of child
- Name of medication or prescription number
- Directions for giving medication: dose, time, number of days, and if given by mouth, eye drops or applied topically to the skin.
- Name of prescribing health professional
- Date prescription was filled
- Date medication expires

**Over-the-counter (OTC)** are in original containers. Check for:

- Name of child written on container
- Directions are visible and understandable
- Dose recommended by parents matches the recommended dosage stated on the label. A health care provider must provide signed, written instructions for a dose that does not match the recommended dose on the packaging or if instructions state "ask a doctor" for dosage.
- Written permission for the over-the-counter medication is good for the number of days the medication can be given according to the instructions on the label or the number of days ordered by the health care provider.

## Safety Tips:

- Check expiration date on medication. Refuse expired medication.
- Understand all instructions and be sure instructions are readable before parent leaves.

## Blanket permission slips:

- For OTC topical, non-medical ointments like sunscreen and diapering cream, written permission is valid for up to 12 months.

## Storing Medication

Medications must not be accessible to children:

- Store in locked container, cabinet or closet.
- Store on a separate shelf away from food, hazardous chemicals or cleaning supplies
- For medications that require refrigeration, store in a container one a separate shelf in the refrigerator not accessible by children.



## Emergency medications

**must be stored unlocked and out of children's reach:**

- Emergency medications are needed in life threatening situations such as a severe allergic reaction, severe asthma attack, and blood sugar reaction in a child with diabetes.
- Emergency medications must be stored unlocked for quick administration.
- Children must not have access to any medications.

## Safety tips:

- Check diaper bags and cubbies for medications left behind.
- Adult medications must be stored properly out of reach of children (including purses)

## Administering Medication

Before administering medication:

- Check all information on the permission form for administering medication.
- Take the medication from the locked storage. Relock.
- Wash hands before giving medication to each child.
- Wear gloves for applying topical medications, eye drops and ear drops.
- Prepare dose. Do not touch medication with hands. Use labeled medicine dropper, cup or spoon for accurate measuring of liquid medications.
- Re-check child's name, date, time, dose, how medication is to be given on both the medication container and permission slip.

When to refuse administering medication:

- Never give a medication without a parent's written permission.
- Never give the first dose of a medication.
- Never give a medication someone else has prepared.
- Never give a medication you do not know how to administer. Ask for help.

## Administering medication:

- Re-check child's name, date, time, dose, how medication is to be given.
- Follow any special instructions.
- Give prepared dose to child.
- Wash hands after administering medication.
- Return medication to proper storage. Relock.
- Document date, time, dose, route and signature on the medication log.



## After administering medication:

- Observe child's response to the medication. Record and report any side effects or reactions to parent and director. Seek medical care as needed.
- If an allergic reaction occurs, notify the parent immediately.
- If a life-threatening reaction occurs, call 911 immediately.
- If an error is made document what was given. Inform parents and director immediately. Seek medical care as needed.
- If child does not get all the medication, refuses to take it, or vomits/spits, do not give another dose. Inform parent and director. Seek medical advice as needed. Document.
- After giving last dose of medication, return **unused medication** to the parent.



## 6 Rights of Medication Administration

- Right child
- Right date
- Right time
- Right dose
- Right route
- Right documentation

Source:  
North Carolina Child Care Health & Safety  
Resource Center [www.healthychildcarenc.org](http://www.healthychildcarenc.org)

