

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Administration of medications is the most common health care intervention request made by families of schools. Medications include oral and/or epipens.

These medication administration procedures include students, who by reason of insufficient age, maturation or physical or cognitive ability, are not able to manage their own medication administration. The administration of medication in a school must be a necessary administration for the health of the student.

The procedures for accepting, administering, recording and dispensing prescription medication also apply to **patent** or **over-the-counter** medication, regardless of duration or means of administration.

For a school to agree to administer medication, parents or guardians must provide all required information and meet all conditions established by the Division.

These medication administration procedures include:

1. a description of who is included in the procedures;
2. general conditions of accepting medication for administration
3. record keeping procedures;
4. storage and disposal requirements; and
5. response with respect to missed dosages and adverse reactions.

The administration of medication in a community setting must be a **necessary administration**. If a medication does not necessarily have to be administered in a community setting, then the administration should not occur. Schools should seek the co-operation or parents, the guardian agency and health care professionals in establishing medication administration schedules that do not require administration during schools hours.

Prior to the administration of medication by an employee of a school, the parent or guardian agency who has care and custody of the child must complete a Medical Questionnaire and an "Authorization for Administration of Prescribed Medication".

II. General Conditions of Accepting Medication for Administration

Administration of medication in schools requires that several conditions be met. The purpose of these conditions is to promote the safety and well-being of the child, and to ensure that the school acts responsibly in accepting medication for administration.

These conditions are:

1. Completion of a Medical Questionnaire and an “Authorization for Administration of Prescribed Medication” form by the parent or guardian including confirmation that the first dose of a medication has been administered in the presence of the parent or guardian and has been well-tolerated, unless Health Care Plan states otherwise.
2. In-person delivery of the medication to the school setting by a responsible adult.
3. Medication shall be provided in the **original pharmacy labeled container**, which identifies clearly the:
 - a. Name of the child
 - b. Name of the licensed medical practitioner
 - c. Name of the medication
 - d. Dose
 - e. Frequency/time and route of administration
 - f. Name of the pharmacy
 - g. Date the prescription was filled.
4. Label must be on the container itself, such as medication bottle, tube, inhaler, etc., and not merely on the package.
5. If required, measuring implements must be provided.
6. Medications have a finite usable period of effectiveness. Parents/guardians are responsible for replacing expired medications, as well as the removal and disposal of expired medication.
7. Parents/guardians are responsible for ensuring a supply of medication is maintained.

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8. Medication is the property of the child's family. It is expected that medication(s) will be sent home with parents at the end of the school year.
 9. Medication not picked up by a responsible adult will be disposed/destroyed in accordance with Workplace Hazardous Material Information System guidelines.

Medications presented to the school that do not meet these conditions of acceptance cannot be administered by any employee of the school. The parent or guardian would then retain full responsibility for administering the medication.

III. Storage Requirements

Storage and safety are important concerns when medications are administered in schools.

1. Medications administered in schools shall be stored in a locked location. A locked location may be a cabinet, cupboard, drawer, steel box or other similar arrangement.
2. The key to the locked location shall be kept in a secure location.
3. The key to the locked location shall remain on the school premises at all times.
4. A spare key to the locked location shall be reasonably available, and every designated employee who administers medication in the school during the normal course of their duties shall be made aware of the location of the spare key.
5. If a medication requires refrigeration, the locked location shall be a locked box within a refrigerator.
6. Medications for more than one child may be stored in one locked location. However, under this circumstance, **each medication shall be separated by a clear physical means** such as, but not limited to, metal partitions, sealable plastic containers, individual plastic zipper bags or appropriate equivalent.

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7. Each physical separation shall be clearly labeled with the child's name.
 8. **Medications that may be required urgently shall not be stored in a locked location.** These medications may be stored in an easily accessible location or carried by the child or responsible adult. Such medication includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. Inhalers or
 - b. Adrenaline auto-injectors (e.g. EpiPen).

Appropriate records and administration procedures shall be maintained.

IV. Recommended Procedures

1. **One** employee in the school shall be designated to be responsible for administering medication to a child. In addition, a substitute or delegate employee shall also be identified to administer medication in the absence of the primary person. Volunteers shall not be designated to administer medication.
2. Each employee responsible for medication administration shall be fully aware of the:
 - a. Specific details of medication administration for a child;
 - b. Location of the spare key to the locked storage location;
 - c. Location of the "Request for Medication Administration" for a child; and
 - d. The medication administration procedures specific to the school.
3. To prepare for administration of medication, **the** employee shall:
 - a. Wash **his/her** hands;
 - b. Prepare supplies (e.g., measuring devices, installation appliances, etc.); and
 - c. Assure **him/herself** of:
 - The **right** medication
 - The **right** child
 - The **right** dose
 - The **right** time
 - The **right** method.

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4. **In each and every administration**, the employee administering the medication shall read the label three times:
- When removing the medication from the locked storage;
 - Before the medication is removed from its container; and
 - After the medication is removed from its container but before it is administered to the child.

Note: If requested, pharmacies will provide **two original pharmacy labeled containers**. One container may be used exclusively in the school. This is recommended.

5. Each child who is administered medication shall have a separate Medication Administration Record. Each Record shall include the:
- Name of the child;
 - Name of the medication, the dosage, route (e.g. oral), time of administration;
 - Signature of the person administering the medication; and
 - Outcome of administration (initial indicates completed administration): If not completed, reason must be given (e.g. absent, refused, missed, error).
6. The Medication Administration Record shall be completed immediately following each administration. Medication shall not be signed as given until complete.
7. Medications shall be returned to the locked storage location immediately.
8. The employee administering the medication shall clean/wash any supplies, devices or appliances used in the administration.
9. The employee administering the medication shall practice principles of hygiene (e.g., wash hands) and Universal Precautions as appropriate.

V. Error in Medication Administration

In instances where an error in medication administration has occurred:

1. Determine if the error is due to:
 - a. Missed administration;
 - b. Overmedication; or
 - c. Incorrect medication.
2. Contact the parent or guardian and describe the medication error.
3. A course of action should be determined in consultation with the parent or guardian which may include:
 - a. Contacting the child's physician;
 - b. Having parent or guardian take the child home;
 - c. Taking the child to a hospital; or
 - d. Another appropriate course of action.
4. If the parent or guardian cannot be contacted, the school will contact:
 - a. The prescribing physician and/or;
 - b. The dispensing pharmacist and/or;
 - c. The emergency contact listed for the child and/or;
 - d. The Poison Control Centre (check local telephone directory).

VI. Planning Field Trips

These medication administration procedures may be adapted to permit children with medication administration needs to be included on field trips.

In general, consideration should be given to:

1. **necessity** – medication should only be administered on a field trip if necessary;
2. **care and control** – except for inhalers and auto-injectors, medications should be in the care and control of a responsible adult;
3. **Medication Administration Record** – the Record should be completed by the employee responsible for the administration of medication upon return from the field trip;

4. **emergency communication** – there should be reasonable and appropriate access to a telephone, cellular phone or radio communication during a field trip; and
5. **emergency medical response** – must be determined and considered reasonable by the parent or guardian and principal in consultation with other members of the medical team if requested.

VII. Over-the-Counter Medication

Over-the-counter medication shall not be administered by any employee in a school unless:

1. an “Authorization for Administration of Prescribed Medication” form has been completed by the parent or guardian;
2. the first dose of an over-the-counter medication has been administered previously and has been well-tolerated.