

Medication Administration



There are times when medicines will have to be given during child care to combat illness or to prevent health problems. This is why a medication policy is essential in all child care environments. Here are a few basic tips on what should be considered when putting together a policy that works for you, parents and children in your care.

When should medication be given?

- It is safest and best for children to receive their medication at home.
- Before assuming responsibility for giving medicine, you must have clear, accurate written instructions and confirmation from a doctor of the child's need for medication while in your care.
- Over-the-counter medication should also have a doctor's order and instructions.
- When medications are required during childcare hours, a consent form should be signed by parents, regarding all aspects of administration.

Labeling and Storing Medications

All prescribed and over-the-counter medication brought to child care should be:

- Dated and kept in original container.
- Labeled with child's first and last name, name of healthcare provider, expiration dates, name and strength of medicine.
- Stored with manufacturer's instructions or prescription label with specific, legible instructions for administration, storage and disposal.
- Kept in containers with child-resistant caps, and out of children's reach.



Proper Procedures for Giving Medications:

- Wash hands.
- Follow the **SIX RIGHTS**:
 - **Right Child**
 - **Right Medication**
 - **Right Dose** (use correct dispenser not silverware)
 - **Right Route** (mouth/eyes/inhale)
 - **Right Time**
 - **Right Child** (double-check)
- Administer medication.
- Return medication to proper storage out of children's reach (locked storage is recommended).
- Wash hands.
- Record on right child's Medication Record (each child should have their own medication record).
- Accurate, written documentation of every dose is critical to prevent mistakes and improve safety and health for every child.
- Record on medication record if any medication is not given and document reason.

Talking Points for Parents

- Make sure parents know that medication is safest given at home and that, only if necessary, should a child care provider be involved.
- Share your policy with parents and have a Consent/Administration Form filled out and signed for each medication.

Resources: download medication from and other sample health and safety policies at www.iidc.indiana.edu/ecc/res-health.htm

- American Academy of Pediatrics, PA Chapter, (2002) Model Child Care Health Policies, 4th Ed. <http://www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org>
Information consistent with Caring for our Children 2002: <http://nrc.uchsc.edu>

