

Administering Medication

Medication is a prescription medication or a over-the-counter medication. This does not include items such as topical ointments including diaper creams or sunscreen.

You must obtain authorization to administer medication. This authorization must be from the child's parent and must be signed and dated. If you are only giving a single dose of medication, telephone authorization may be used. An electronic format that is capable of being viewed and saved may also be an alternative.

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Medication must be given as stated on the label directions or as amended in writing by the child's health-care professional. Parents may not change the dosage on their own.

Medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's full name and the date it was brought into the operation. Medication can only be administered to the child for whom it is intended and cannot be given after its expiration date.

When you are administering medication to a child in your licensed program, you must record the following:

- Full name of the child whom the medication was given;
- Name of the medication;
- Date, time, and amount of medication given; and
- Full name of the employee administering the medication.

You must keep all medication records for at least three months after administering the medication, however most legal counsel will recommend medication logs are kept indefinitely.

Medication must be stored out of the reach of children or in a locked container. Stored medication cannot be done in a manner that would contaminate food. Refrigerated medication must be kept separate from food.

Once medication has expired, it must be destroyed or returned to the parent. When a child withdraws from your program, medication must be given to the parent at the end of care.

Licensed programs do have the option to chose not to administer medication during care. Parents must be notified of this company decision in writing in your operational policies. This does exclude medications and treatments that are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act, such as breathing treatments and EpiPens. These are considered a reasonable accommodation to a special need.

Know your medication

When children are sick, their doctors may order a prescription medication, such as an antibiotic, from a pharmacist. Over-the-counter medications, such as acetaminophen or first aid cream, can be purchased without a doctor's prescription.

It can be unsafe for a child to take more than one kind of medicine. Medication must only be given as stated above. If a parent is requesting you to administer multiple prescriptions, ask the parent if the doctor is aware of all medications prescribed. Here are some common questions to ask parents before agreeing to administer medication:

- Does this medication need to be refrigerated?
- Does the time administered conflict with nap/rest period? If so, should the child be woken up or should a different time be appointed?
- Is it okay to give the medication at mealtime? Are there any foods the child should not eat while taking this medicine?
- Will this medicine cause a stomachache, diarrhea, or other side effects?

Document all conversations between the center director, caregiver, and parent when discussing medications.