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# Medication Administration (Route of Administration)

Patient name: \_\_\_\_\_ Admission: \_\_\_\_\_

NRS  
DATE INITIAL

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**I. The client/caregiver can list measures used when administering medication to the eye (ophthalmic).**

- A. Wash your hands. Read label.
- B. Hold the bottle upside down.
- C. Tilt your head back and look upward.
- D. Hold the bottle in one hand, and place it as close as possible to the inner aspect of the eye.
- E. With the other hand, pull down lower eyelid to form pocket.
- F. Place correct number of drops into the pocket.
- G. Avoid touching eye with tip of applicator.
- H. If using more than one eyedrop medication, be sure to wait at least 5 minutes before second medication.
- I. Close eye, or press lower lid lightly.
- J. If applying ophthalmic ointment, apply thin line of ointment evenly along the inner edge of the lower lid (from inner to outer edge).

**II. The client/caregiver can list steps when administering ear drops.**

- A. Wash hands. Read label.
- B. Have client positioned with ear facing up. Stabilize head by placing hand on head.
- C. Check for occlusion of outer ear canal with cerumen or drainage. Wipe outer canal with cotton-tipped applicator.
- D. Check positioning of pinna before medication.
  - 1. For adults and children older than 3 years old, gently pull the pinna up and back.
  - 2. For children younger than 3 years old, gently pull down and back.
- E. Hold the dropper 0.5 inch above ear canal, and instill ordered amount of drops.
- F. Suggest that the client remains in same position for 5 to 10 minutes.

NRS  
DATE INITIAL

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- G. If ordered, a cotton ball may be placed in the outer part of ear canal. Do not press into canal.

**III. The client/caregiver can explain steps to administer nasal drops or spray.**

- A. Wash hands. Read label.
- B. Ask client to blow nose to clear nasal passages.
- C. Client should open and breathe through their mouth.
- D. Hold tip above nostril (without touching), and direct medication toward the top of the nasal cavity.
- E. Suggest client stay in position for 5 minutes.

**IV. The client/caregiver can list steps to apply transdermal medication.**

- A. Read the manufacturer's instruction regarding application site and frequency of changing.
- B. Apply gloves before handling medication to avoid absorption of medication.
- C. Remove previous medication patch and cleanse area.
- D. Press patch to clean, dry, and hairless skin.
- E. Rotate sites to prevent skin irritation.
- F. Label patch with date, time, and initials.
- G. Discard old patch and gloves safely, keeping away from children.

**V. The client/caregiver can list steps to administer vaginal medication.**

- A. Apply gloves, open suppository, or measure cream in provided syringe.
- B. Lubricate rounded end of suppository.
- C. Expose vaginal opening by separating the labia.
- D. Insert rounded end of suppository along the posterior wall of vagina as far as it will pass.

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NRS  
DATE INITIAL

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- E. If using a cream, jelly, or foam, insert applicator along posterior wall and push plunger until empty.

**VI. The client/caregiver can list steps to administer rectal suppositories.**

- A. Lie on left side with knees pulled toward chest.
- B. Apply gloves and open suppository. Lubricate the round end.
- C. Gently insert the lubricated suppository into the rectum.
- D. Remain in same position to prevent expulsion of the suppository.

**VII. The client/caregiver can explain the method of Metered-Dose inhaler administration.**

- A. Inhalers are hand-held pressurized devices that deliver a premeasured amount of medication to the respiratory system. It is delivered in a fine mist or spray.
- B. Wash hands. Read medication label to check accurate medication and dose. Read any manufacturer's instructions.
- C. Remove cover, and shake if indicated.
- D. Hold inhaler in dominant hand and use inhaler in one of two ways:
  - 1. Place inhaler in mouth with opening toward back of throat, closing lips tightly around it or
  - 2. Position device 1 to 2 inches in front of widely opened mouth. Lips should not touch the inhaler.
- E. Take deep breath and exhale. Depress medication canister with inhaler in place. Breathe in slowly, and hold breath for 10 seconds.
- F. Remove inhaler, and exhale through nose or using pursed lips.
- G. If using a spacer device with inhaler
  - 1. Remove mouthpiece cover from inhaler and spacer.
  - 2. Insert inhaler into the end of the spacer device.
  - 3. Continue as described previously.
- H. Precautions when using inhaler are
  - 1. Use inhaler only as ordered by physician.
  - 2. If using bronchodilator with other medication, always use the bronchodilator first.
  - 3. Wait about 5 to 10 minutes between the two medications.

NRS  
DATE INITIAL

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**VIII. The client/caregiver can list important points to remember when giving oral medications.**

- A. Medications are most commonly given in tablet or capsule form.
- B. Some medications are enteric coated and designed to dissolve in the small intestines. This is to avoid exposure to acids in the stomach. These medications should not be crushed.
- C. Other medications have been designed to dissolve very slowly by creating a sustained-release tablet or capsule. They can be extended-release, long-acting, or slow-release tablets. They too should not be crushed or opened.
- D. Client should be seated or in side-lying position to avoid aspiration.
- E. Sublingual administered medications are placed under the tongue and allowed to dissolve.
- F. Buccal-administered medications should be placed in mouth against the mucous membrane until dissolved.
- G. Lozenges should not be chewed or swallowed.
- H. Powdered medications mixed in liquid should be taken immediately after mixing.
- I. Ensure that the client has safely swallowed medication.

**IX. The client/caregiver can list measures to administer oral medications in tablet form.**

- A. Wash hands. Read label.
- B. Offer sips of liquid prior to medications for those people with a dry mouth.
- C. If client has difficulty swallowing, (and there are no contraindications), pills may be crushed. Mix crushed medication in small amount of soft food (pudding, applesauce, etc.).
- D. Rinse oral cavity, and offer or provide mouth care as needed.

**X. The client/caregiver can list measures to administer liquid medication.**

- A. Wash hands. Read label.
- B. If medication is a suspension, shake well before using.
- C. Do not use silverware spoons to measure or give medications.

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NRS  
DATE INITIAL

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- D. Measuring spoons are accurate, but can spill easily.
- E. Oral syringes or dosing cups can be used.  
Caution: The Food and Drug Administration has reports of young children choking on syringe caps. Caution: Do not use hypodermic syringe or syringe with a needle.
- F. Measure into the dosing cup at eye level to be accurate.
- G. Hold the bottle with label against palm of hand while pouring. This prevents future difficulty in reading label caused by spillage.
- H. Flavorings can be added to liquid medications to improve taste.

Prepared information provided with medication by pharmacist and manufacturer

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**RESOURCES**

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Pharmacist