

## Procedure for oral drug administration

### Introduction

### Essential equipment

- Drugs to be administered
- Recording sheet or book as required by law or hospital policy
- Patient's prescription chart, to check dose, route and so on
- Glass of water
- Any protective clothing required by hospital policy for specified drugs, such as antibiotics or cytotoxic drugs, for example gloves.
- Medicine container (disposable if possible)

### Preprocedure

Action	Rationale
1 Wash hands with bactericidal soap and water or bactericidal alcohol handrub.	To minimize the risk of cross-infection ( <a href="#">DH 2007, C</a> ; <a href="#">Fraise and Bradley 2009</a> ).
2 Before administering any prescribed drug, check that it is due and has not already been given. Check that the information contained in the prescription chart is complete, correct and legible.	To protect the patient from harm ( <a href="#">DH 2003b, C</a> ; <a href="#">NMC 2008a</a> ).
3 Before administering any prescribed drug, consult the patient's prescription chart and ascertain the following:  (a) Drug  (b) Dose  (c) Date and time of administration  (d) Route and method of administration  (e) Diluent as appropriate  (f) Validity of prescription  (g) Signature of prescriber  (h) The prescription is legible.	To ensure that the patient is given the correct drug in the prescribed dose using the appropriate diluent and by the correct route ( <a href="#">DH 2003b, NMC 2008a</a> ). To protect the patient from harm ( <a href="#">DH 2003b, NMC 2008a</a> ).

## Procedure

<p><b>4</b> Select the required medication and check the expiry date.</p>	<p>Treatment with medication that is outside the expiry date is dangerous. Drugs deteriorate with storage. The expiry date indicates when a particular drug is no longer pharmacologically efficacious (<a href="#">DH 2003b</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2008a</a>).</p>
<p><b>5</b> Empty the required dose into a medicine container. Avoid touching the preparation.</p>	<p>To minimize the risk of cross-infection. To minimize the risk of harm to the nurse (<a href="#">DH 2007</a>, <a href="#">Fraise and Bradley 2009</a>).</p>
<p><b>6</b> Take the medication and the prescription chart to the patient. Check the patient's identity by asking the patient to state their full name and date of birth. If the patient is unable to confirm details then check patient identity band against prescription chart.</p>	<p>To ensure that the medication is administered to the correct patient (<a href="#">NPSA 2005</a>).</p>
<p><b>7</b> Evaluate the patient's knowledge of the medication being offered. If this knowledge appears to be faulty or incorrect, offer an explanation of the use, action, dose and potential side-effects of the drug or drugs involved.</p> <p>Wash hands with bactericidal soap and water.</p>	<p>A patient has a right to information about treatment (<a href="#">NMC 2008a</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2008b</a>).</p>
<p><b>8</b> Assist the patient to a sitting position where possible. A side-lying position may also be used if the patient is unable to sit.</p>	<p>To ease swallowing and prevent aspiration (<a href="#">Chernecky et al. 2002</a>).</p>
<p><b>9</b> Make any required assessments such as pulse, BP or respiration.</p>	<p>These are required to ensure the patient is fit enough to receive medication, for example BP before antihypertensives (<a href="#">Chernecky et al. 2002</a>).</p>
<p><b>10</b> Administer the drug as prescribed.</p>	<p>To meet legal requirements and hospital policy (<a href="#">DH 2003b</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2008a</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2008b</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2009</a>).</p>
<p><b>11</b> Offer a glass of water, if allowed, assisting the patient where necessary.</p>	<p>To facilitate swallowing of the medication (<a href="#">Chernecky et al. 2002</a>, <a href="#">Jordan et al. 2003</a>).</p>
<p><b>12</b> Stay with the patient until they have swallowed all the medication.</p>	<p>To ensure that medication has been taken on time (<a href="#">Chernecky et al. 2002</a>).</p>

## Postprocedure

<p><b>13</b> Record the dose given in the prescription chart and in any other place made necessary by legal requirement or hospital policy.</p> <p>Wash hands with bactericidal soap and water.</p>	<p>To meet legal requirements and hospital policy (<a href="#">DH 2003b</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2008a</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2008b</a>, <a href="#">NMC 2009</a>).</p>
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