

Section:	J	Policy/Procedure:	Operating Guideline
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## Medication Administration and Storage

In Fulton County Schools, the administration of medications to students is understood to be a task delegated by parents to the school's principal. The principal then determines which school employees he/she feels prepared to take on this responsibility in addition to the designated school-based Clinic Assistant. School volunteers are not allowed to administer student medication.

It is the role of Fulton County Schools Student Health Services to provide an annual update for Clinic Assistants and Clinic Substitutes about the safe and proper administration and storage of medication. Principals are encouraged to send additional school-based staff that may be called upon to administer student medications to these district trainings.

This annual district training on medication administration and storage will include information on the following topics:

- Fulton County Schools policies, procedures and guidelines related to medication administration and storage (Refer to "Annual Emergency Parent Letter")
- Proper parental authorization for all prescription and non-prescription medications. This includes special authorization for certain student to carry emergency medications on their person. (Refer to "Medication Authorization" form and "Authorization to Carry Emergency Medication" form)
- Medication administration safety practices
- Documentation of medication administration
- Procedures for common routes of medication administration
- Procedures for administration of emergency medications
- Medication error recognition, student treatment and follow up
- Proper storage and labeling of all medications
- Proper disposal and documentation of medication at school
- When to contact the Fulton County Schools Cluster Nurse (Registered Professional Nurse)

Medications administered in schools may include:

- Regular daily medications prescribed for children with acute or chronic health conditions.
- Emergency medications, such as those prescribed for allergic reactions, asthma, seizures and complications of diabetes
- Medications requested by parents for use on an "as needed" basis for other mild symptoms. These are known as "over-the-counter medications"

## Guidelines for all staff designated to assist students with medications

### Guidelines:

These guidelines should be used in the administration of any medication. They should also be used as the basis for supervision of non-medical and/or unlicensed health personnel who are administering medication. Please see the Medication Authorization Form.

1. Wash hands before and after administering medications.
2. Compare labeled medication container with written order.
3. Read label three times—when taking it from the storage area, before giving it to the student, before returning it to the storage area.
4. Check expiration date on label.
5. Check student's identity with name on label. Ask him to tell you his name; don't say "Are you Johnny Smith?"
6. Give the prescribed dose, using the prescribed route (i.e. by mouth), and at the prescribed time. It is best to be able to observe the child as he takes the medication.
7. Record medications given on the medication log, and initial each time.
8. Relock the storage area.

### **[Labeling Identification:**

- 1. All non-prescription medication must be in the original, labeled container or package.**
- 2. Prescription medication must be in the original, pharmacy container.**
- 3. These provision apply to medication stored in the clinic and those carried by students.**

### **Medication Storage:**

**All medications are required to be stored in the clinic, unless students have permission to carry medication via a district-approved parental authorization form (SHS-1 or SHS-2). All medication must be stored in a locked cabinet within a secured area with access limited to authorized personnel at all times.]**

### Safety Procedures:

1. Medications taken by students at school should be taken under the direct supervision of the designated staff member, and logged immediately on the medication log.
2. Everything possible should be done to minimize distractions when medications are being given, as distractions can cause errors to be made.
3. When administering medications remember the:

#### Five Rights of Medication Administration

- Right Student
- Right Medication
- Right Dose
- Right Time
- Right Route

4. All medications should be periodically assessed for expiration. Parents should be notified, and medications should not be sent home with students.

5. Under no circumstances should a medication be given in a different way than that written on the authorization form.
6. Some medications need to be given either with food, or on an empty stomach, so timing is always important.
7. Medications should be labeled if special storage is needed (i.e. dark, or refrigeration).
8. Allergic reactions and other side effects can occur even after the child has been taking the medication for a while. If any side effect such as a rash, dizziness, cough, or breathing difficulty occurs, do not give another dose, and call the parents immediately. If there is significant or increasing breathing difficulty, 911 may need to be called.

#### Administration Procedures:

These procedures should be followed for both prescription and non-prescription medications.

##### 1. Oral Medication

- Student should be sitting or standing.
- Pour the tablet from the bottle into the lid of the container, and then into the medicine cup or the child's hand. Avoid touching the tablet yourself.
- Pour liquid medicine by setting the medicine cup on a firm surface at eye level, and pouring to the prescribed level, reading the fluid level carefully. Place the lid upside down on the table to avoid contamination. Wipe the bottle off with a tissue or clean cloth before replacing the cap.
- Unless contraindicated, offer a fresh cup of water to aid in swallowing.
- Make sure the student swallows the medication.
- Return medication to the cabinet or refrigerator. Lock cabinet.
- Record the medication on the log.
- Observe the student for any immediate medication reaction or side effect.

##### 2. Topical medications (ointments and creams)

- Gather necessary equipment including gloves or tongue blade as needed.
- Squeeze medication from the tube, or using tongue blade, take ointment from jar.
- Spread a small quantity of the medication, using a tongue blade, in a thin layer on the skin or on a bandage to be placed on the skin.
- If ordered, protect the skin surface with a dressing, and use tape or gauze to secure in place.
- Remove gloves and wash hands.
- Return medication to storage cabinet.
- Record the medication on the log.
- Observe the student for any immediate medication reaction or side effect.

##### 3. Eye medications

###### Eye drops

- Explain procedure to student.
- Clinic personnel and child should both wash hands.
- Give student tissue for wiping off excess medicine.
- Have student tilt head back and look up.
- Measure the correct amount in the dropper.

- You can have the child keep his eyes closed and drop the medicine in the inner corner of his eye (one at a time). Then, keeping his head back, have child open his eyes slowly, and the medicine will go in.
- Or you can gently pull the lower lid down, and instill the drops in this space.
- If more than one drop is needed, it is usually best to do one drop at a time in each eye to be treated, then go back and give the second drop in the same way.
- Repeat the procedure if the drop falls to the cheek.
- Remove excess medicine with clean tissue, but ask student not to rub his eyes.
- Wash hands.
- Return medication to storage area.
- Record the medication on the log.
- Observe the student for any immediate medication reaction or side effect.

Eye ointment-same as above except:

- Gently pull lower lid down, and have student look up.
- Apply eye medicine along the inside edge of the lower eyelid.
- Have child close his eyes, and not rub them.

4. Ear drops

- Have the student lie down on his side, with the ear to be treated “up.”
- Fill medication dropper with prescribed amount of medication.
- Gently lift the ear upward and outward.
- Instill drops, holding dropper near the ear canal.
- Have student lie on that side for 1-2 minutes to allow drops to flow down the ear canal.
- Wash hands.
- Return medication to storage area.
- Record the medication on the log.
- Observe the student for any immediate medication reaction or side effect.

5. Nose drops

- Student may be lying on his back or be sitting up, with head tilted back.
- Fill dropper with prescribed amount of medication.
- Place dropper just inside the nostril and instill correct number of drops.
- Repeat procedure in other nostril.
- Instruct student to keep head tilted back, and not rub the nose for 3-5 minutes.
- Nasal sprays can be instilled with the child sitting up. Spray or squeeze the prescribed number of times, instructing the child to gently and slowly breathe in through his nose each time. Repeat on the other nostril.
- Wash hands.
- Return medication to storage area.
- Record the medication on the log.
- Observe the student for any immediate medication reaction or side effect.

6. Inhalers (with and without spacers)

Metered dose inhaler (MDI) with spacer (aerochamber)—Children using inhalers should have been taught to use them properly, but still should be monitored to make sure they are not leaving steps out.

- Have the child sit up straight, or stand to use the MDI.
- Remove the caps from the spacer and inhaler.
- Shake the inhaler well (for about two seconds).
- Attach the inhaler to the spacer.
- Have the child exhale (breathe out).
- Have the child place the mouthpiece of the spacer in his mouth.
- Press the inhaler to spray the medicine into the spacer.
- Take a deep breath from the spacer, hold it for a count of 10, and then exhale.
- Younger children may need to take another deep breath from the spacer, hold it, and then exhale, in order to get all of the medication.
- If two “puffs” are ordered, wait one minute, then repeat the above steps from “Press the inhaler”.
- Wash hands.
- Return medication to storage area.
- Record the medication on the log.
- Observe the student for any immediate medication reaction or side effect.

Metered dose inhaler without spacer

- Remove cap from mouthpiece.
- Shake inhaler well before use (at least two seconds).
- Breathe out completely.
- Hold inhaler in upright position with mouthpiece directly in front of the mouth, about two finger widths away from the mouth.
- Open mouth and press top of inhaler firmly to release medicine. At the same time, take a deep breath in and hold it for a count of 10.
- Exhale.
- Wait 1-2 minutes before taking a second puff, if ordered.
- Wash hands.
- Return medication to storage area.
- Record the medication on the log.
- Observe the student for any immediate medication reaction or side effect.

#### **[7. Prescription Inhaler, EpiPen, Insulin or other Approved Medication**

- **Students are permitted to carry the above types of medications during the school day, field trips or other school-related activities, if parental permission is provided in advance on the district-approved form (SHS-2).**

#### **8. Over-the-Counter, non-Prescription Medication**

- **Elementary students must store all medications in the clinic, which may be administered only with parental permission provided on the district-approved form (SHS-1).**
- **Middle school students may carry medications in the following categories with them during the school day, field trips or other school-related activities, if parental permission is provided in advance on the district-approved form (SHS-2).**

- Acetaminophen
- Antacids
- Aspirin
- Cough or throat lozenges
- Ibuprofen
- Midol
- Oral antihistamines.
- **High school students may carry medications in the following categories with them during the school day, field trips or other school-related activities.**
  - Acetaminophen
  - Antacids
  - Aspirin
  - Cough or throat lozenges
  - Ibuprofen
  - Midol
  - Oral antihistamines.]

## MEDICATION ERRORS

Even the most experienced health care providers can make medication errors. Following the safety guidelines listed above will minimize chance of errors. Being distracted by other duties while giving medications is probably the easiest way this happens in schools. Medication errors can include: an overdose of the right medication, an under dose of the right medication, giving the wrong medication, giving a medication at the wrong time or in the wrong way.

Whenever an error in medication administration is recognized or discovered, the following steps must be taken:

1. Keep the student in the health room/clinic; or, if the student has already returned to class, have the student accompanied back to the office or clinic.
2. Ask the student how he is feeling- if he has any feelings of stomach upset, dizziness, itching, or any other symptoms.
3. Identify the incorrect dose or type of medication taken by the student.
4. Notify parents.
5. Immediately notify the principal and cluster/school nurse of the error. If an under dose was given, the remainder of the dose may either be omitted or administered, following medical advice received from parent, physician or school nurse.
6. If unable to reach the parents, or child's physician, notify the Georgia Poison Control Center (404-616-9000) for instructions. They will help you determine if further actions need to be taken.
7. Carefully record, on the student's health record, all circumstances and actions taken, as well as the student's current status.
8. An incident report should be completed within 24 hours and submitted to the principal.  
Include the name of the student, parent name and phone number, and a specific statement of what the medication error was, who was notified, and what remedial actions were taken.
9. Notify Student Health Services and/or your Cluster/School Nurse.

## IMPORTANT REMINDERS

1. With the start of each new school year, the parent/guardian must complete a new Medication Authorization form.
2. Contact your Cluster Nurse for any medication request that is unclear. You must know what the medication is, the dosage, what the possible side effects might be, and why it is prescribed for the student. This includes over-the-counter medications.
3. Contact your Cluster Nurse for any medication that is ordered and given through a route which you are unfamiliar. (Rectal, injection, nebulizer, etc.) These instances will require the Cluster Nurse to provide you with additional training.
4. If a parent requests a change in medication dosage, you must have/obtain a new authorization form. Contact your Cluster nurse for any assistance or questions.
5. School volunteers are not allowed to give medications.
6. FCS medication administration policies should be followed at all school-chaperoned events, including field trips. Contact your Cluster Nurse for questions about specific situations.
7. If you are uncertain about ANY medication request, contact your Cluster Nurse as soon as possible and certainly BEFORE administering. For example: just because a parent signs an authorization for an over-the-counter medication, it does not mean it is safe or appropriate to give.
8. If a student requires an over-the-counter medication on more than 5 consecutive days, contact the Cluster Nurse. If you are uncertain about the indication a parent has identified for an over-the-counter medication, contact the Cluster Nurse. NEVER administer any medication which you have ANY questions or concerns. Always call your Cluster Nurse or Special Education Nurse.
9. Before administering an over-the-counter medication to any student, in addition to the normal safety precautions, make sure you:
  - Check eSchoolPlus for any medical alerts
  - Know the student's medical complaint and document it
  - Ask if they have taken any prior medication that day.
10. Do not accept any medication that is not properly packaged and labeled as noted in the FCS annual "Emergency Parent Guidelines" letter to parents. Check expiration dates on all medications. Note any dates that will expire before the end of the school year and give parents sufficient notice. Never administer expired medication.
11. The authorization for students to carry certain emergency medications on their person at school is a privilege with corresponding responsibilities. Notify your Cluster Nurse of all students in this category to insure an appropriate health plan and medication forms in place for the student.
12. Keep all medications in a locked cabinet or cart at all times. (Prescription and over-the-counter.)
13. For emergency medications, make sure you keep a copy of the authorization form and emergency contacts with the medication. This medication should be taken out of the school building with you during evacuations. If you have any questions about which medications fall into this category, contact your Cluster Nurse.

Cross References:

Legal Reference:

Reference:

Adopted Date:

Revision Date:

Scope Notes:

Status: Current