

Medication Assistance Activity Sheet: Inhaled Medication

MAP Level 2 & 3: Medication Assistance Activity Sheet

This activity sheet guides unregulated health care providers when assisting with inhaled medication.

check	Activity
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The First Medication Safety Check is done by the regulated health care provider who verifies the completeness and appropriateness of the prescriber's order (e.g., dispensing pharmacy or nurse)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduce yourself and review the client's care plan/medication record for instructions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perform hand hygiene and gather the required supplies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medication for inhalation (e.g., metered dose inhaler [MDI], dry powder inhaler, nebulizer, etc.) • non-sterile gloves • other items as per care plan: e.g., other Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), spacer, nebulizer machine, face mask, saline, tissue, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perform the Second Medication Safety Check : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check for allergies and alerts on the medication label and care plan/medication record • check the expiry date and/or beyond use date of the medication • check & compare the medication rights* on the medication label and care plan/medication record • report any discrepancies or incorrect/unclear information to the supervisor immediately; do not proceed until concerns are resolved
<input type="checkbox"/>	Prepare the medication according to instructions on the care plan/medication record <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • perform hand hygiene • check that the medication container is not cracked or leaking. Visually inspect the contents for particles or discoloration (when able) • verify the medication is labelled for inhalation • prepare medication as directed in the care plan: e.g., shake MDI before use, prime dry powder inhaler, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Perform the Third Medication Safety Check : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the client using two (2) unique client identifiers • explain the activity to the client • check the medication rights* comparing the medication label and care plan/medication record
<p>* Medication rights: right client, right medication, right time, right dose, right route, right documentation, right of refusal. Unregulated health care providers are not required to know the "right reason" when providing medication assistance as directions on the care plan are followed.</p>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide MAP Level 2 or 3 assistance as per the care plan, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • don non-sterile gloves and other PPE as required • position the client for medication assistance (e.g., client seated upright) • provide the medication as directed in the care plan: e.g., insert MDI into spacer and spray medication; remind client to take a slow deep breath and hold breath for 10 seconds, etc. • if a second dose is required, wait the specified amount of time before repeating the steps (e.g., 30 seconds before a second dose from MDI, or other time between types of inhaled medication) • assisting the client to rinse their mouth with water after the medication, if directed on the care plan
<input type="checkbox"/>	Complete the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • discard used supplies and clean reusable equipment (e.g., spacer, if used) • perform hand hygiene • complete documentation • report observations as instructed on the care plan, or issues/concerns to the supervisor



Tips

Metered dose inhaler (MDI)	Dry powder inhaler
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are different types of metered dose inhalers (also called inhalers or puffers) but they all operate the same way <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Open or remove the cap before use ○ Shake the inhaler about 10 times before inserting into a spacer* (when using) • Have the client breathe out before inserting the mouthpiece of the MDI or spacer into their mouth; the client should not breathe into the device • If another “puff” is required, wait 30 seconds • The client may need to rinse their mouth and spit out the water after inhaling the medication; check the care plan for instructions • Wipe the mouthpiece with a dry tissue or cloth after use • Re-cap or close the device after use <p>Note: A new MDI that has not been used, or not used within 2 weeks needs to be primed. Refer to the care plan for instructions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many different types of dry powder inhalers; check the care plan for instructions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Some have capsules that are placed in the device then pierced when the lid is closed, others have a canister that is turned or the opened/closed with a lid. ○ The device may need to be primed before use if it is new or hasn't been used within a certain time-frame ○ All devices have a dose counter to show how many doses of medication are left • Do not shake a dry powder inhaler before use • Have the client exhale before putting the mouthpiece in their mouth; the client should not breathe into the device • The client may need to rinse their mouth and spit out the water after inhaling the medication; check the care plan for instructions • Wipe the mouthpiece with a dry tissue or cloth after use • Re-cap or close the device after use
Using a Spacer with an MDI	Using a Nebulizer Machine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A spacer improves the uptake of medication into the client's lungs • The MDI is inserted into one end of the chamber and adult client inserts the mouthpiece between their teeth and closes their lips; infants and preschool children use a mask instead of a mouthpiece • After the MDI is sprayed into the spacer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ adults take a slow deep breath and hold it for 10 seconds before removing it to breathe normally ○ infants and preschoolers breathe normally through the mask for 6 breaths • Refer to the care plan for spacer cleaning <p>Note: some adults may need a mask on the spacer, or need to take multiple breaths when using the spacer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A tubing and mask with a chamber to hold liquid medication is attached to the nebulizer machine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Medication may come in pre-mixed nebulizers, or need to be prepared with saline; follow the care plan instructions • When the nebulizer is powered on, it creates a mist out of the medication which the client inhales while breathing normally with the mask <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The worker may need to wear PPE during care, such as a mask, to reduce risk of inhaling the medication • Refer to the care plan for machine, mask, and tubing cleaning and/or replacement
<p>Place the date the medication is opened on the label and use by the “best before” date or expiry date</p>	

References:

- Alberta Health & Wellness (2013). *Health Care Aide Provincial Curriculum: Course 6-Module 1: Assisting with Medication Delivery*
- Calgary COPD & Asthma Program (2021). *Medication and Devices*. <https://ccapalberta.ca/medication-and-devices/#devices>

Note: When providing MAP Level 1 (reminder), the unregulated health care provider does not handle or prepare medication for the client. Therefore, they do not perform the medication rights or perform safety checks.