

Patient Information Leaflet

SAFELY ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO YOUR BABY

Produced By: NICU

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been written to support you in giving your baby medicines. The aim of the booklet is to help you understand why your baby needs to continue taking prescribed medicines when he/she goes home. It will also give you all the information you need to make sure you are able to give your baby's medicine safely.

We like to encourage you as parents/carers to be involved as much as possible in the care of your baby. This is why we teach you to give the medicine that your baby needs before he/she goes home.

At first this may sound a little daunting but, like anything else when you have learnt more about it you will find it easier than you thought.

HOW WILL I BE SUPPORTED TO GIVE ANY MEDICINES MY BABY WILL NEED SAFELY?

We will teach you how to give your baby's medicine when he/she is stable and in the special care nursery. We will explain what to do step by step and let you practice along the way. To make sure that we tell you all you need to know without leaving out any important details, we will complete the checklists of points to remember and things to discuss that are included in this leaflet.

If your baby is still tube feeding you will need to have completed **'parents' tube feeding training'** before you start this information and training pack on **'giving your baby's medicine'**.

You will be able to practice giving your baby medicines, whilst being supervised by the nurse helping you look after your baby.

This will happen as often as you feel is necessary, until you feel confident to be left to give them yourself, after the medicines have been checked with your nurse. Teaching will progress as slowly or as quickly as you decide so that you can learn properly and gain confidence.

If your baby needs to continue medicines once he/she is discharged home make sure that you understand what the nurse has told you about:

- What the medicine is called
- What the medicine is for
- Any side effects
- How you give it
- How much you give
- How to store the medicines
- Where to obtain further supplies and when
- What to do if no medicine is available e.g. if you drop the bottle

WHY DOES MY BABY NEED MEDICINES?

Vulnerable babies who have needed to be on a neonatal unit often require iron and vitamins supplements to support their growth and development. Your baby may also require other medicines to support a medical or surgical condition.

GIVING A MEDICINE

1. Wash and dry your hands
2. Prepare all the equipment that you will need to give the medicine
You will need: -
 - The correct medicine
 -ml syringe for drawing up the medicine
 - Bib/paper towels
 -ml syringe for checking position of N/G tube if in place
 - pH indicator paper/strips if N/G tube in place
3. Check the position of the feeding tube using the pH indicator paper/strips as you have been taught in the **‘parents’ tube feeding training pack’**
4. When you are sure that the tube is in the right place, give your baby the medicine slowly.
5. If your baby is not tube fed support your baby in an upright position and then place the tip of the syringe in the side of your baby’s cheek and give slowly
6. If your baby splutters, coughs or vomits stop giving the medicine and allow time for him/her to recover. Once he/she has recovered continue to give the rest of the medicine. If help is required please see the nurse helping you to look after your baby
7. When you have finished giving the medicine clear away all the equipment and wash and dry your hands
8. Record that the medicine has been given

GIVING MEDICINES

Action	Date shown	Date practiced	Signed
Wash and dry hands thoroughly			
Prepare equipment and place within easy reach			
Read the label on the medicine bottle to make sure it is the right medicine & check expiry date			
Read the label on the medicine bottle to make sure you know how much medicine to give			
Make sure you know what size syringe you are going to use and understand the markings on the syringe			
Position the baby safely to give the medicine			

Check feeding tube is in the correct position if required			
Give the medicine			
Position the baby safely after you have given the medicine			
Dispose of the equipment correctly			
Record that the medicine has been given			

GIVING MEDICINES CHECKLIST

Safety aspects	Date discussed	Signed & title
Completed tube feeding package if required		
How would you check the feeding tube was in the stomach if your baby is still being tube fed?		
How would you know how much medicine to give?		
Why is it important to check the label each time you give a medicine?		
How would you know what time to give a medicine?		
How do you know if the medicines need to be given in a special way or at a special time?		
If your baby retched or vomited when you were giving him/her a medicine what would you do?		
Who would you contact and how if there were any problems while in hospital or when you go home?		
How do you look after equipment required for giving medicines?		
What would you do if your baby vomited after giving medicines?		

Notes:

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