

Basic Understanding of Medications

Vocabulary with Definitions

Medication label	Label on the medication that must contain all the information required.
Discharge	a drainage (liquid) that may be clear, bloody, infected, or white
Contamination	The act of transferring infection from one surface to another.
Infection	A process caused by bacteria or a virus. May cause death.
Cerumen	Ear wax.
Conjunctiva	The lining of the eyelids and the covering of the eyeball.
Metered dose oral inhaler	A pre-mixed, hand-held inhaler that delivers one dose of medication per squirt.
Ear auricle	The flap of the ear.
Ear lobe	The bottom part of the outer ear
Ear canal	The canal or tube that leads from the outer ear to the ear drum.
Nostril	Either opening of the nose.
Gastric tube	A flexible tube that is surgically placed into the stomach. (Not the kind that is placed through the nose into the stomach.)
Nebulizer	An electrical device that turns liquid medication into a spray so it can be inhaled

Sim's position	The patient on his/her left side and chest, the right knee and thigh drawn up, the left arm along the back.
Pre-mixed	A medication mixed by the pharmacy.
Suppository	An easily melted medication that is formed in the shape of a bullet for easy insertion into the rectum or vagina.
Anus	The opening of the intestines to the body surface.
Vagina	The canal in the female from the external genitalia to the cervix.
Lithotomy	Knees flexed with legs spread apart

Medical Abbreviations (Note reads from left to right).

	Abbreviation	Meaning		Abbreviation	Meaning
1	BID	2 times a day	2	od	Right eye
3	TID	3 times a day	4	os	Left eye
5	QID	4 times a day	6	mg	Milligram
7	Cc (ml)	Cubic centimeter (milliliter)	8	PO	By mouth
9	D/C	Discontinue	10	q	Every
11	PRN	As needed	12	gtt	Drop
13	tsp	Teaspoon	14	Tbsp	Tablespoon
15	HS	Bedtime	16	ou	Both eyes
17	\overline{c}	With	18	npo	Nothing by mouth
21	NKA	No known allergies	22	QD	Every day
23	ac	Before meals	24	pc	After meals
25	\overline{s}	Without	26	QTC	Over-the-counter medication

Forms of Medication

Medication Form	Definition	Example
Oral Medication	A medication that is taken by mouth. It may be a solid form or a liquid form.	Bayer Aspirin, aspirin with an orange coating, cough drops, liquid Tylenol.
Liquid medication for a gastrostomy tube	Medication that is in liquid form in order to be given through a gastrostomy tube. Never put anything through a gastrostomy tube that has not been approved by the supervising nurse.	Liquid Tylenol
Topical medications	Medications that are applied to the skin.	Neosporin
Inhaled medications	Medications that are taken through the mouth and inhaled into the lungs.	Atrovent
Suppositories	Medications that are mixed in a base that melts at body temperature. The are molded into shapes suitable for insertion into the rectum or vagina	Ducolax rectal suppositories or Monistat Vaginal suppositories.