

Medication Storage



When deciding where to keep medication, make sure the area you choose in your program is:

General Medication

- A clean and secure place that children cannot get to (inaccessible).
- A cool, dry and dark place, unless the directions state something else.

Emergency Medication

- In an area near the child where you can get it quickly.
- You may decide if the best place is:
 - ◆ in your emergency bag; or
 - ◆ in a pack that you wear.

Your health care plan will have the place(s) where you will keep medication in your program. You may have a couple of places. ***If you change the area where you keep medication, you must update your health care plan.***

Refrigerated Medication

- If you keep medication in your food refrigerator, you need to keep it separate from food and it must also be kept in a leakproof container. A leakproof container is a container that when turned over and shaken does not allow any liquid to escape.
- If you have a separate refrigerator you use for medication only, make sure the refrigerator is locked or is inaccessible to children.
- Keep the refrigerator at a temperature between 36 - 46° F.
- If your program has a power outage or your refrigerator stops working, call your local pharmacy and follow their recommendations regarding the use of the medication kept in the refrigerator.

Controlled Substances

- Store in a locked area with limited access.
- Always count the number of pills or note the amount of liquid in the bottle when receiving from a parent.
- Keep a running count each day if more than one staff member is giving the medication or has access to the storage area.
- Count the number of pills or note the amount of liquid left in the bottle when giving the medication back to the parent.

Medication Disposal

Always return medication to the parent when medication has expired, has been discontinued or if the consent has expired.

If you are unable to return the medication to the parent, follow these guidelines:

- Take the medication out of its original container.
- Mix the medication with an undesirable substance, such as coffee grounds or kitty litter. The American Pharmaceutical Association recommends first crushing or dissolving the medication in water.
- Place the material in a leakproof container, such as an empty can or a sealed plastic bag.
- Throw the container in the trash.
- Flush medication down the toilet only if the medication package or insert states it is safe to do so.

Stock Medication

Your program may keep a supply of certain over-the-counter medication that is not labeled for a specific child to have available for use if a child needs it while in care. You will follow the same guidelines to store stock medication as you follow to store medication for a specific child.

Your program must apply for a waiver (Handout 4.8) if it plans to keep any stock medication. OCFS has a policy statement that details what your program must do if your program plans to keep stock medication. See Handout 4.10.

Programs that participate in the New York State Department of Health's Fluoride Program can stock non-child-specific fluoride tablets supplied by DOH, provided the program has a waiver approved by OCFS.