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 state 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.

Programs that participate in the New York State Department of Health’s Fluoride Program can stock non-child-specific fluoride tablets supplied by DOH.

Child care programs that store and administer medication that is not labeled for a specific child must have an over-the-counter stock medication policy in place before beginning to store any over-the-counter medication. The over-the-counter stock medication policy must address the safe storage and proper administration of the stored over-the-counter medication and must address the need for strict infection control practices as they pertain to stock medication.

- Stock medication must be kept in a clean area that is inaccessible to children, and any stock medication must be stored separate from child-specific medication.
- Stock medication must be kept in the original container and have the following information on the label or in the package insert:
  - Name of the medication;
  - Reason(s) for use;
  - Directions for use, including route of administration;
  - Dosage instructions;
  - Possible side effects and/or adverse reactions;
  - Warnings or conditions under which it is inadvisable to administer the medication; and
  - Expiration date.
- Child care programs that stock supplies of over-the-counter medication, which are not in single-dose packaging, must provide a separate mechanism to administer the medication for each child that may need the medication.

- Once a device has been used for a specific child in care, that specific device must be disposed of or reused only for that specific child and must be labeled with the child’s first and last name.

- The program must include the procedure in the over-the-counter stock medication policy for dispensing the stock medication from the container to the device, or directly administering to the child, without contaminating the stock medication.

- All stock medication must be administered using best practice techniques in accordance with the directions for use on the medication package.

- Child day care programs may not stock prescription medication.