

HANDOUT D-1

Medication Orders

Components of a Complete Order

- Medication name
- Strength of medication (if required)
- Dosage of medication to be administered
- Route of administration
- Specific directions for use, including frequency of administration
- Reason for administration if the medication is ordered PRN (as needed)

Examples:

Lasix 40 mg. – 1 tablet by mouth once a day in the morning

Tylenol 325 mg. 1 tablet by mouth every 4 hours as needed for pain

- Do not accept medication orders that state “continue previous medications” or “same medications” because they are not complete medication orders

Types of Medication Orders

There are four types of medication orders

- Routine orders
- PRN orders
- One time orders
- STAT orders

Routine Medication Orders

- Detailed order for a medication given on a routine or regularly scheduled basis such as every morning at 10 AM
- The reason the medication is being administered is usually in the resident’s history and physical information or the prescribing practitioner’s progress or notes

PRN Medication (as needed) Orders

- PRN means as needed or necessary
- A medication which is ordered to be given “when necessary” or “as needed” within a designated number of hours
- Are for medications that are needed periodically, such as pain medications, cough syrup, or laxatives
- Time interval will be listed on the MAR
 - A medication that is to be given every 4 hours (q4h) as needed cannot be given unless 4 hours have passed since the last time the resident has taken the medication
 - For example, a medication is listed on the MAR for pain to be given by mouth every 4 hours PRN
 - The Medication Aide is giving the resident their medications and the resident asks for a pain medication
 - Medication Aide looks at the last time the medication was given and it was only 3 hours ago
 - Medication Aide cannot give the medication because enough time has not passed since the last medication
 - Medication Aide can return and give the medication in 1 hour if it is still needed
 - Medication Aide should report the pain to supervisor to be evaluated further to see if a different medication or dosing time is needed

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One Time Orders

- Some medications to be given only once and are ordered to be given at a specific time and then discontinued.

STAT Orders

- These medications need to be given immediately or NOW. The STAT orders must be clearly written on the MAR that tell you the resident, medication, dose, route, and time. Do not give medications that do not have clear written instructions.

Activity:

Identify the information missing for each medication order below:

Risperdal 2 mg. Give 1 tablet by mouth

Riopan Liquid 15 ml. by mouth every hours as needed

Aricept 1 tablet by mouth at bedtime

Tylenol 2 tablets by mouth every 4 hours as needed for shoulder pain

Ativan 0.5 mg. 1 tablet by mouth as needed