

# Medication to Students Procedure

## FAQs for Parents and Carers

### Background

BCE has recently revised the procedure and practices relating to medications administered to students at school or during school-based activities. Please take note of the following information and FAQ's.

All medication to be administered (given) to a student by school staff must be medically authorised by the child's registered health practitioner. The school will be unable to administer medication that is not medically authorised.

### Medication includes:

- Over-the-counter medicines – can be purchased from supermarkets, health food stores or on-line retailers. Examples include paracetamol, ibuprofen, antihistamines, alternative medicines, supplements, vitamins, etc.
- Pharmacy medicines – can only be purchased from a pharmacy. Examples include cough and cold medicines, heart burn relief, etc.
- Pharmacist only medicines – can only be purchased from a pharmacy after speaking with the pharmacist. Examples include asthma inhalers, EpiPens, mild steroid creams, glucagon (hypokit), etc.
- Prescription only medicines - can only be purchased from a pharmacy with a valid prescription from a treating health practitioner.
- Controlled drugs – such as Methylphenidate (*Ritalin, Artige, Concerta*), Dexamfetamine sulfate (*Aspen, Sigma*), Lisdexamfetamine (*Vyvanse*), opioid pain medication, etc.

For any medication to be administered to your child during school hours and/or during school-based activities, parents and legal guardians are to provide the school with:

- a completed [\*Request to Administer Medication form\*](#).
- the medication (in its pharmacy-dispensed packaging) with a completed current pharmacy label (that indicates that it is prescribed for your child), and if required
- additional written medication administration instructions signed by the registered health practitioner. Examples of written instructions include:
  - a signed letter, or other signed written instructions
  - an Asthma Action Plan and/or
  - an Anaphylaxis Action Plan and/or
  - a medication order for insulin with a diabetes management plan and/or
  - a completed *Medication Administration Instructions* form for 'as needed' medication.

Schools are unable to cut medication. If your child takes a medicine that requires cutting of a tablet, the tablet will need to be pre-cut and packaged by a pharmacist in a Webster-Pak (or similar), prior to providing the medicine to the school.

Please refer to the *Request to Administer Medication* form for further information on school requirements.

## Frequently asked questions

### **What are the new requirements for medication at school (or during school-based activities)?**

Medications you provide to the school for administration to your child must be authorised by a registered health practitioner. This authorisation will be provided via the pharmacy label attached to the packaging. School staff will not be able to administer medication if medical authorisation cannot be confirmed.

The school may also require additional written instruction from your child's registered health practitioner to assist school staff to safely administer medication to your child. Where additional written instructions are required, school staff will not be able to administer medication if they have not been received.

### **Does the school need medical authorisation for Paracetamol or Ibuprofen?**

Yes, all medication must be medically authorised. For medications that are required on an "as needed" basis (not emergency medications), your child's registered health practitioner will need to complete a [Medication Administration Instruction](#) form to assist the school in safely administering medication to your child. School staff will not be able to administer medication if they have not received instructions to safely administer the medication.

### **My child takes a vitamin supplement, from a health food store. Do I still need to get medical authorisation for this supplement to be administered at school (or during school-based activities)?**

Yes, all medication must be medically authorised, including over-the-counter medicines which can be purchased from supermarkets, health food stores or on-line retailers. Examples include paracetamol, ibuprofen, antihistamines, alternative medicines, supplements, vitamins, etc.

### **My child has asthma or anaphylaxis and requires medication at school that will be administered in an emergency. Do I need to provide any other information to the school or is the medication with the pharmacy label sufficient?**

In addition to the instructions provided on the pharmacy label, the school will need additional written information from your child's registered health practitioner. You will need to provide an Asthma Action Plan and/or, an Anaphylaxis Action Plan completed by your child's registered health practitioner.

### **My child is trialing a new medication which requires changes in dosage over the next four (4) weeks. What information does the school need to support my child and safely administer their medication?**

Safely administering medication to your child requires clear written instructions from your child's registered health practitioner. As there will be changes to the dose of medication written instructions must include the schedule for increasing or decreasing the dose of medication. E.g.

- Week 1 (commencing date) – ½ tablet at 11am-12:30pm
- Week 2 (commencing date) – 1 tablet at 11am-12:30pm

Please ensure that the pharmacy label also indicates that changes to the dosage will occur during the period the medication was dispensed for. For example, the label may state: "*increase each week by half a tablet to a maximum of X tablets*", "*as directed by the doctor*", etc. Consider providing the pharmacist with the Dr's written instructions, if the change of dosage is not indicated in the prescription.

### **My child has an appointment and will not be at school when their medication is normally administered. Can the school administer the medication later in the day?**

No, the school cannot administer medication outside of the timeframe authorised your child's registered health practitioner. Parents/Legal guardians can attend the school in person to administer medication if it is required outside the school's medically authorised timeframe.

**I have provided my child's medication in pharmacy-dispensed packaging with the pharmacy label attached. When my child's medication runs out at school, can I just refill the old packaging/bottle from the new supply?**

No, medication must be supplied to the school in the most recently dispensed packaging from the pharmacist. Dispensing dates are clearly displayed on the pharmacy label. Pharmacies are able to provide medication in separate packaging so that medication can be provided to the school and also kept at home, in pharmacy-dispensed packaging.

**My child's medication needs to be cut in 1/2 to ensure that the correct dose is administered. Can I cut their medication at home and provide it to the school?**

No, to ensure correct dosing and storage, medication that requires cutting to ensure correct dose must be pre-cut by a pharmacist and packaged in a Webster-Pak or similar.

**Can my child bring their medication to school to give to the office or can I give their medication to the Before School Care staff for them to provide to the school?**

No, a school can only accept medication from a parent or legal guardian. Please contact the school if there are extenuating circumstances.

**My child was not able to take their morning dose of medication at home. Can I ring the school and ask them to give my child their morning dose of medication if I send through written authorisation.**

No, the school is not able to administer additional doses of medication outside the school's medically authorised administration instructions. Parents/Legal guardians can attend the school in person to administer medication if it is required.