

Drug Administration

- Basic safe practices for medication/vaccine administration, assess and document:

- 1) **Patient's identity**
- 2) **Correct medication**
- 3) **Correct dose**
- 4) **Correct route**
- 5) **Appropriate time**

The " Basic Rights" of medication/vaccine administration:

#1 The right patient

You do not want to administer the medication or vaccine dose on your medication or vaccine tray to the wrong patient! Make sure you are administering the right person by verifying the patient's name and date of birth before you administer medication or vaccine to them. And while you are at it, make sure you have screened for contraindications and precautions for that medication or vaccination.

#2 The right vaccine (and diluent) / medication

Errors have occurred administering the wrong vaccine or medication product to a patient. Check the vial label three times to be sure you have chosen the correct vaccine product (and diluent, when applicable). Check the expiration date of the vaccine (and diluent) before using to be sure they are not out of date.

#3 The right dosage

Errors have been made giving a wrong amount of medication or vaccine to a person, such as giving a pediatric vaccine to an adult or vice versa. Medication/Vaccine dosages are usually guided by the patient's age (and are not based on the patient's weight). Check the package insert or an appropriate guidance document (see resources below) to confirm the appropriate dose for your patient's age.

#4 The right route, needle, and technique

Errors are often made administering vaccines or medication using the wrong route, needle, or technique. Be sure you know the appropriate route of administration (oral, intranasal, subcutaneous, intramuscular (IM), or intradermal) for the vaccine you are using. Needle selection should be based on the prescribed route, size of the individual, volume and viscosity of vaccine, and injection technique. Follow CDC guidance to confirm you are adhering to the correct route, needle, and technique. Deviation from recommendations can reduce vaccine efficacy or increase local adverse reactions.

#5 The right time

Sometimes vaccines are not administered according to the official U.S. immunization schedule. They are given to the wrong age patient, or they are administered earlier than they should be. Be sure the patient is the appropriate age for the vaccine you plan to administer and that the appropriate interval has passed since a previous dose of the same vaccine or between two live vaccines. For medication, check the frequency of the ordered medication. Double-check that you are giving the ordered dose at the correct time. Confirm when the last dose was given.