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Medication Tips

- Make sure you understand what the medication is for, when to administer it, and when to give it again if regurgitated or dosage is missed. Also, note if the medication is to be given on an empty stomach, or after a meal.
- Ask if there are any over-the-counter medications that should not be taken with this medicine to avoid any drug interactions.
- Make sure you know how best to store each medication: some should be refrigerated, some should not be in direct light or near heat, etc. If refrigeration is required, make sure that medicines stay cold when traveling.
- Shake liquid medications well before administering – especially if compounded. Some compounded medications like Captopril may need preservatives such as ascorbic acid to keep them effective. Check with the pharmacist to make sure that compounded medications are made correctly.
- Draw medications at a time of day when you are not distracted so there is less chance of error.
- Limit the number of people administering medications to avoid confusion about when it was administered and double dosing. If double dosing occurs, call the doctor or pharmacist immediately.
- Draw meds into oral syringes directly from the bottle using bottle adapters and syringe caps. This can help reduce the amount of spills and not waste medicine. The hospital and pharmacy can give you more syringes with caps, and bottle caps for this use. Or, contact these companies:
 - Baxa offers “Adapta-Caps” - www.Baxa.com
 - Medidose: www.medidose.com or 1-800-523-8966 or
 - Abundant Health: www.abundanthealth4u.com or 888-718-3068*(Please note: these caps may not be child-proof.)*
- Create a system for keeping medications organized, especially if the child is on multiple medications. Some parents draw up a day’s worth or a few day’s worth of medications, and put each medicine into cups that are labeled with the time of day they are to be given. (Put cups in the refrigerator if necessary.) Others keep several doses of each medication together, and then take one syringe of each medicine needed. Color coding the medications with colored rubber bands, or different colored caps can reduce the chance of mix-ups. For example, all “red” syringes are Lasix, all “blue” are Captopril, etc. This helps avoid confusion between medications that look similar.

- Remember to remove air bubbles from the syringe to ensure the proper dosage. To do this, turn the syringe up, “flick” it with your finger to allow the bubble to rise to the top, then push the syringe so the medicine is at the tip, then add more medicine if needed. Or, simply draw up a little medicine, push it out under the liquid, then draw up again to the prescribed amount.
- Dosage/concentration – The dosage (how much you give) depends upon how concentrated the medication is. Make sure when refilling medications that the concentration is the same as before. If the concentration has changed, so will the necessary dosage.
- If your child has trouble taking a liquid medication, ask the pharmacist if it comes in different flavors. Or, see if it comes in pill form, if the child is old enough.
- When giving children’s aspirin to a baby, crush it in the syringe, and then add water to dissolve. Some brands of aspirin may crush and dissolve better than others.
- Some children can swallow medication in pill form with a spoonful of yogurt, applesauce or pudding.
- Oral medications can cause tooth decay. Always brush teeth or rinse mouth after administering medications to reduce the chance of decay. For infants, wipe the gums with a soft cloth to remove excess medication from gums.
- Ask the doctor if your child should avoid any over-the-counter medications. Some people with congenital heart defects should avoid decongestants due to the possibility of increased heart rate and arrhythmia.
- If you have any questions about any medications your child takes, call the pharmacist or doctor.