



CNA HealthPro

FAQs – Office Medications

Q. I keep some medications in the office to dispense to patients when needed. How can I prevent theft and other problems?

A. The dispensing of medications – whether antibiotics, NSAIDs, barbiturates or narcotics – requires proper protocols and controls. Here are a few guidelines to help you protect your patients and your practice.

- Review and document the patient’s medical history prior to dispensing any medication.
- Maintain complete control over the dispensing of medication. Even if a patient simply wants two aspirin, members should not dispense them unless the dentist has reviewed the patient’s medical history and given authorization.
- Store prescription medications in a locked cabinet or drawer. Access to drugs should be limited to the dentist and designated employees.
- Maintain a dispensing log for *all* over-the-counter and prescription medications. Keep the log in the locked cabinet with the medications.
- In the medication log, document the date, patient’s name, drug dispensed, dosage, route of administration, prescription number or lot number, time of administration and person dispensing the medication. Make a similar notation in the patient’s record.
- Perform regular quality assurance audits, comparing patient records to the medication log for thoroughness and accuracy of information. This process can help identify medication theft and deter potential theft.
- Educate all staff members about medications and disbursement policy, and update their knowledge on a regular basis.

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