

Home Health Aide Training

Module 16. Assisting with Self-Administered Medications

Goal

The goal of this module is to prepare participants to assist clients with self-administered medications.

Time

1 hour and 40 minutes

Activities	Teaching Methods	Time
1. Assisting with Self-Administered Medications	Brainstorming, interactive presentation, pairs work, large-group discussion, and demonstration	1 hour and 40 minutes

Supplies

- Flip chart, markers, and tape
- Paper and pencils
- Large index cards, or half-sheets of 8 ½ x 11 paper
- Samples of different types of medications, both prescription and over-the-counter

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Learner's Book

1. Eight Kinds of Medication
2. Assisting Mrs. Garcia to Take Her Medications
3. The Five Rights
4. Reading Prescription Labels
5. Reading Prescription Abbreviations
6. Assisting Clients with Taking Medications: What to Do and What Not to Do

Worksheet

- Worksheet 1. Find “The Five Rights” on a Prescription Label
- Worksheet 2. Find “The Five Rights” on Over-the-Counter Medication Labels

Skills Checklist

- Skills Checklist 1. Assisting with the Self-Administration of Medications (DOH Procedure Checklists XII-39, 40, 41, 42, 43)

Handouts

- Handout 1. Key Terms
- Handout 2. Summary of Key Information

Advance Preparation

Review all the training instructions and learner's materials for this module. Note that icons are used to remind the trainer of the following:



When you are *presenting* or covering Key Content *in the discussion*. (Key Content is also addressed in the Learner's Book and the handouts, but we use the “key” icon only when it is covered elsewhere in the learning process.)



When it is important to ask a particular question to get participants' input.



When it is time to refer to the Learner's Book.



When it is time to distribute a worksheet.

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When it is time to distribute a skills checklist.



When it is time to distribute and discuss a handout.

Copy the worksheet and handouts for participants.

Prepare copies of the skills checklists. You will need one copy for each participant, to be collected and reused for subsequent trainings. Laminating the skills checklists will make them more durable and reusable.

Gather all necessary supplies and equipment.

Please note that the Key Content is meant to be background information for the trainer. **DO NOT READ OUT LOUD TO PARTICIPANTS.**

Activity 1. Assisting with Self-Administered Medications

Prepare the following flip chart pages:

- “Types of Medications” (Step 2)
- “The Five Rights” (Step 6)
- Sample prescription label shown in Worksheet 1 (Step 9)
- “Do” and “Do Not” (2 pages, Step 15)

Gather samples of various types of medications (containers should be empty) to pass around the classroom. Prepare for the demonstration by filling an empty liquid medication bottle (e.g., cough syrup) with water, and getting a calibrated medication cup.

Print each bullet from the “Do” list and the “Do not” list (from section **10** in the Learner’s Book) on a half-sheet of 8½-inch by 11-inch colored (pale) construction paper or on a large index card (one item per sheet or card). Make sure you do **NOT** label the item as “Do” or “Do Not.” Laminate, if possible, so they can be reused in multiple workshops.

Distribution of **Skills Checklist 1. Assisting with the Self-Administration of Medications** is optional in this module. Practice and return demonstration of this skill will take place in the ADL: Bathing and Personal Care module.

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Activity 1. Assisting with Self-Administered Medications

1 hour and 40 minutes

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

Explain why home health aides must assist clients to take medications, rather than give (i.e., administer) the medications themselves.

Describe what home health aides can do to assist clients in taking their own medications and what they should not do.

List “The Five Rights” and demonstrate how to make sure they are correctly followed.

Describe how to find “The Five Rights” on a prescription label and on a box of over-the-counter medication.

Define common abbreviations on prescription labels.



Key Content

- Medications can be very helpful in relieving discomfort and curing or even preventing disease. However, the same medication that can be helpful in one circumstance can also be harmful if taken by the wrong person, in the wrong amount, or at the wrong time. Thus, home health aides can play a very important role in helping clients to ensure that they are getting the right medication and are taking it the right way. But they must also ensure that the client is the one who actually gives him- or herself the medication and takes full responsibility for whatever effect it may have.
- The home health aide can assist the client by bringing the medication container to him or her and helping to open it, reading the label and confirming the “Five Rights,” checking for the expiration date of the medication, providing water or other

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appropriate means to help take the medication, positioning the client to be able to take the medication, documenting all medications that are used, and putting away any equipment involved.

- The home health aide can help the client by checking for the “Five Rights”—the right person is getting the right medication at the right time in the right dose and by way of the right route.

Activity Steps

Brainstorming and Interactive Presentation—30 minutes

1. **Introduce the topic.** Ask participants:

? *What is the purpose of medications?*

? *How can medications hurt us as well as help us?*

Explain why it is important that home health aides do not actually administer—or give—medications, but only “assist” the client to take his or her own medications.

2. **Conduct first brainstorm.** Ask:

? *What are the different types of medications?*


Write all correct answers on a flip chart page [pills and capsules, patches, drops (eye, ear, nose), ointment, oxygen, injections, liquids, and suppositories]. Add missing items until the list is complete. Ask participants to explain what each one is.

Flip Chart



<u>TYPES OF MEDICATIONS</u>

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3. Conduct second brainstorm. Ask:

 *How can we “assist” the client to take a medication without actually giving it to him or her?*


If necessary, refer to the different types of medications to prompt participants’ thinking about how to assist.

4.  **Review 1. Eight Kinds of Medication and 2. Assisting Mrs. Garcia to Take Her Medications.** Acknowledge the information that they already mentioned in their brainstorming, and point out the new information that they didn’t mention.
5. **Review safety protocols.** Note that hands should always be washed before handling any equipment (e.g., spoons, cups) that comes in contact with a medication. The worker should never touch any medication directly with his or her hands. If it is necessary to assist a client in removing oral medications from a container, shake the required amount onto a clean surface (bottle top, dish, or paper towel).
6.  **Explain “The Five Rights.”** List them on a flip chart page (using the TRAMP mnemonic); ask participants what each word means to them. Note that they have this information in **3. The Five Rights** in the Learner’s Book.


Flip Chart

<u>THE FIVE RIGHTS</u>	
The Right:	Time
The Right:	Route
The Right:	Amount
The Right:	Medication
The Right:	Person

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7.  **Show samples.** Hold up your samples of different types of *prescription* medications. Point out the different packaging and different places where they would find the prescription label. Review **4. Reading Prescription Labels** in the Learner’s Book.

Pairs Work and Reporting—10 minutes

8.  **Form pairs and give instructions.** Ask participants to quickly form pairs. Distribute **Worksheet 1. Find “The Five Rights” on a Prescription Label.** Then ask each pair to find each of The Five Rights and circle each one on their worksheet. Let them know they will have three minutes to do this.

Teaching Tip

While the pairs are working, post the flip chart page with the same information that is on their worksheet (see Step 9).

9. **Facilitate reporting by pairs.** After three minutes, call time. Ask one pair to report where they found “the right person.” Once you get the right answer [Jane Doe], circle it on the flip chart page. Then go on to “the right medication.” Continue through all “Five Rights.”

Flip Chart

CVS Pharmacy #0329
45 Main Street, Anytown, NY 12345

Jane Doe
63 Baker Street, Anytown, NY 12345

LORAZEPAM 0.5 MG TABLET MYL
Substituted for Activan 0.5 mg tablet BIO

TAKE ONE TABLET BY MOUTH
EVERY 6 TO 8 HOURS AS NEEDED

Quantity:15 Refills require authorization


Store Phone: 718 234-5678

RX#: C23456


Prescriber: Marcus Welby, M.D.

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Interactive Presentation—5 minutes

10.  **Review prescription abbreviations.** Review **5. Reading Prescription Abbreviations** in the Learner’s Book. Note that most prescription labels these days use the complete words (not the abbreviations), but they should know what these are, in case they do see them at some point.
11. **Show samples of over-the-counter medications.** Hold up your samples of different types of *non-prescription* (over-the-counter) medications. Note that the labels with these medications are longer and harder to read, but they still have to contain “The Five Rights.”

Pairs Work and Reporting—15 minutes

12.  **Give instructions.** Ask participants to work in the same pairs. Distribute **Worksheet 2. Find “The Five Rights” on Over-the-Counter Medication Labels.** Ask each pair to find each of The Five Rights and circle each one on their worksheet. Let them know they will have *five minutes* this time to do this.
13. **Facilitate reporting by pairs.** After five minutes, call time. This time, use the TRAMP guide to find The Five Rights. Ask one pair to report where they found “the right *time*.” Once you get the right answer(s), go on to “the right *route*.” Continue through all “Five Rights.”

Teaching Tip

This is more complicated than the prescription labels. Here are the correct answers:

- Time: “not more than 2 gels in 24 hours”
- Route: “with a glass of water”
- Amount: “not more than 2 gels in 24 hours”
- Medicine: “Acetaminophen 200 mg and Aspirin 200 mg”
- Person: anyone who does NOT fit their “warnings” and “Do not use” categories

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14. Review information on nonprescription medication. Note that, even though these medications are not prescribed, it is just as important to make sure the client follows “The Five Rights.” There can still be serious complications if the wrong person takes the wrong amount of an over-the-counter medication. Explain that they will be required to demonstrate how to find The Five Rights on a medicine label during the practice lab in the module, ADL: Bathing and Personal Care.

Teaching Tip



(optional) You can distribute and review **Skills Checklist 1. Assisting with the Self-Administration of Medications** now or wait until the ADL: Bathing and Personal Care module.

Pairs Work with Large-Group Discussion—20 minutes

15. Give instructions. Stay with the same pairs. Distribute the cards with “Do’s and Don’ts”—at least one to each pair (see Advance Preparation). Give the pairs a moment to read their cards, and ask them to decide if this is something that a home health aide *can* do when assisting a client to take medications (DO) or if it’s something they should *not* do (DO NOT). While they are discussing, post the two flip chart pages with DO at the top of one and DO NOT at the top of the other.

Flip Chart

<u>DO</u>

Flip Chart

<u>DO NOT</u>

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16. Conduct large-group discussion. Ask each pair to read their card out loud and state whether they think it's a DO or a DO NOT. If they are correct, tape the card to the correct flip chart page. If they are not correct, ask the other participants to help explain why their answer is not correct. Then post the card on the correct flip chart page.


 **17. Review 6. Assisting Clients with Taking Medications: What to Do and What Not to Do.**

Demonstration—20 minutes

18. Set up and conduct demonstration. Show how to assist “Mrs. Garcia” (the client from the module, Providing Care in the Client’s Home) to take a liquid medication. (Ask for a participant to volunteer to be “Mrs. Garcia.”) Mrs. Garcia can use only one hand and that hand is shaking.

Teaching Tip

The Rule: the client always holds the medication. In this demonstration, you hold the cup in one hand and, with your other hand, guide the client’s shaking hand while she pours the medication into the cup. Then transfer the cup to the client’s shaking hand and guide her hand to hold the cup to her lips.

 **19. Summarize the module.** Thank everyone for their good work. Distribute and review **Handout 1: Key Terms** and **Handout 2: Summary of Key Information**. Ask participants if they have any questions.

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Activity 1. Assisting with Self-Administered Medications

1. Eight Kinds of Medication
2. Assisting Mrs. Garcia to Take Her Medications
3. The Five Rights
4. Reading Prescription Labels
5. Reading Prescription Abbreviations

Skills Checklist 1. Assisting with the Self-Administration of Medications

(This may be distributed and discussed now. However, practice and return demonstrations will be in ADL: Bathing and Personal Care module.)

6. Assisting Clients with Taking Medications: What to Do and What Not to Do

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1. Eight Kinds of Medication

There are 8 kinds of medication. Each kind is used in a different way.

Learn what they are:

1. **Drops** are put in the eyes, ears, or nose.
2. **Injections** are poked under the skin.
3. **Liquids** are swallowed.
4. **Ointments** are put on the skin.
5. **Oxygen** is breathed through a mask.
6. **Pills** and **capsules** are swallowed. (Some pills are chewed before they are swallowed.)
7. **Patches** are stuck to the skin.
8. **Suppositories** are placed in the rectum.

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2. Assisting Mrs. Garcia to Take Her Medications

Mrs. Garcia is responsible for taking her own medications.

As a home health aide, you can assist her in some ways but not in others.

You can take these steps:

1. Remind Mrs. Garcia:
 - Which medication to take
 - How much to take
 - When to take it
 - How to take it
2. Check to make sure Mrs. Garcia is taking her own medications, and not someone else's.
3. Make sure the medication is fresh. Check the date on the label to find out when it's too old.
4. Bring Mrs. Garcia everything she needs to take her medication.
5. Read the label to Mrs. Garcia.
6. Assist Mrs. Garcia to open the container and get into the right position to take it herself.
7. Steady Mrs. Garcia's hand as she pours the medication and drinks it.
8. Watch, write down, and report which medications Mrs. Garcia takes.
9. Clean up.

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3. The Five Rights

Getting the wrong medication, or taking it at the wrong time, or in the wrong amount, can cause serious problems for clients. Helping clients to avoid these mistakes is an important job.

Here are two ways to remember what to do:

1. Remember the 5 Rights

Make sure the **right person**

Gets the **right medication**

In the **right dose**

At the **right time**

Using the **right route**.

2. Remember the Word “TRAMP”

T = Time

R = Route

A = Amount

M = Medication

P = Person

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4. Reading Prescription Labels

Some medication has to be ordered by a doctor. This is called “prescription” medication.

Always read prescription labels. The label **MUST** include “**The 5 Rights.**”

1. **Right person.** The label tells the name of the person taking the medication. Make sure this is the client’s name.
2. **Right medication.** The label tells which medication this is. Make sure the client is supposed to take this medication.
3. **Right dose.** The label tells how much medication the client should take. Make sure they take this dose.
4. **Right time.** The label tells when the client should take the medication. Make sure they take it at those times.
5. **Right route.** The label tells how the client should take the medication. Make sure they take it in this way.

Prescription labels also tell:

- When the pharmacy filled the prescription
- The doctor’s name
- The pharmacy’s name, address, telephone number, and I.D. number
- The prescription number
- If the prescription can be refilled

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5. Reading Prescription Abbreviations

Instructions on prescriptions can look like a foreign language! A lot of the information is given in abbreviations. An abbreviation is a short way to say something.

Here are some abbreviations found on prescription slips (or on the label):

Q.D. = Once a day

B.I.D. = Twice a day

T.I.D. = Three times a day

Q.I.D. = Four times a day

H.S. = At bedtime

Q.O.D. = Every other day

P.R.N. = As needed

P.O. = By mouth

Pt = Patient

P.T. = Physical therapist

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6. Assisting Clients with Taking Medications: What to Do and What Not to Do

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As a home health aide, you can assist the client to take their own medications. But you cannot do things that make it look like you are “giving” the medications directly to the client. Here are some of the “do’s” and “don’t’s” of assisting clients with their medications:

DO

- Wash your hands before assisting the client.
- Remind the client when it’s time to take the medication.
- Bring the container to the client (and any equipment the client may need).
- Read the label with the client and check the 5 Rights.
- Check for expiration dates.
- Open the container for the client.
- Assist the client to get into position to take the medication.
- Steady the client’s hand while he or she is pouring out or counting medication.
- Steady the client’s hand while he or she is drinking medication.
- Bring the right liquids to help with swallowing medications.
- Observe, record, and report (see page 3).
- Put medications and equipment away in the proper place.

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6. Assisting Clients with Taking Medications: What to Do and What Not to Do

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DO NOT:

- Assist the client if any of the 5 Rights are “wrong.”
- Assist with medication if the label is missing or changed.
- Let the client take a medication that is expired.
- Count out the medications for the client.
- Hand pills or capsules to the client, pour liquid medication into the client’s mouth, or place pills or capsules in the client’s mouth.
- Mix medication with food or drink.
- Crush or cut medications.
- Give the client an injection or draw up solution for injections.
- Insert suppositories or other medication into the rectum or vagina.
- Put drops into the eye, ear, or nose
- Apply prescription medications to the skin
- Throw medications down the toilet. (Give them to the nurse to dispose of properly.)
- Give the client some of your medication, in case his or hers runs out.
- Take some of the client’s medication, if you’re having the same symptoms.
- Advise the client to stop taking medication once they feel better.

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6. Assisting Clients with Taking Medications: What to Do and What Not to Do

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Observe, Record, and Report for Assisting with Self-Administered Medications

- Observe the client taking the medication.
- Document that the client took the medication, the time, and any other medications or food taken at the same time.
- Report any possible reactions to your supervisor. Call your supervisor if there are any problems or questions.
- Record and report immediately if client:
 - Does not take medication or is taking improperly.
 - Takes medications/supplements/herbs not ordered by physician
 - Has a reaction to a medication that is unusual for the client
 - If medications are dropped or mixed up

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Handout 1. Key Terms

Abbreviation [5]

A short way to write something—usually just two or three letters.

Capsules [1]

Capsules are pills with protective coating.

Drops [1]

Medications that are put in the eyes, ears, or nose.

Injections [1]

Medications that are poked under the skin, using a needle.

Liquids [1]

Medications that are sipped from a cup or a spoon and swallowed.

Ointments [1]

Medications that are rubbed onto the skin.

Oxygen [1]

Oxygen is a gas that comes from a tank and is breathed through a mask. Although we all breathe oxygen all the time, getting it through a mask is necessary for some people with respiratory problems.

Patches [1]

Medications that are stuck to the skin.

Pills [1]

Medications that are swallowed whole (not chewed).

Suppositories [1]

Waxy pellets (with medicine) that are placed in the rectum to dissolve.

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Handout 2. Summary of Key Information

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- Clients are responsible for taking their own medications. As a home health aide, you can assist her in some ways but not in others. Here are the things you can DO, and the things you must not do (DO NOT):

DO

- Wash your hands before assisting the client.
- Remind the client when it's time to take the medication.
- Bring the container to the client (and any equipment the client may need).
- Read the label with the client and check the 5 Rights.
- Check for expiration dates.
- Open the container for the client.
- Assist the client to get into position to take the medication.
- Steady the client's hand while he or she is pouring out or counting medication.
- Steady the client's hand while he or she is drinking medication.
- Bring the right liquids to help with swallowing medications.
- Observe, record, and report (see page 3).
- Put medications and equipment away in the proper place.

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Handout 2. Summary of Key Information

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DO NOT:

- Assist the client if any of the 5 Rights are “wrong.”
- Assist with medication whose label has been removed or changed.
- Let the client take a medication that is expired.
- Count out the medications for the client.
- Hand pills or capsules to the client, pour liquid medication into the client’s mouth, or place pills or capsules in the client’s mouth.
- Mix medication with food or drink.
- Give the client an injection or draw up solution for injections.
- Insert suppositories or other medication into the rectum or vagina.
- Put drops into the eye, ear, or nose
- Apply prescription medications to the skin
- Throw medications down the toilet. (Give them to the nurse to dispose of properly.)
- Give the client some of your medication, in case his or hers runs out.
- Take some of the client’s medication, if you’re having the same symptoms.
- Advise the client to stop taking medication once they feel better.

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Handout 2. Summary of Key Information

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Observe, Record, and Report for Assisting with Self-Administered Medications

- Observe the client taking the medication.
- Document that the client took the medication, the time, and any other medications or food taken at the same time.
- Report any possible reactions to your supervisor. Call your supervisor if there are any problems or questions.
- Record and report immediately if client:
 - Does not take medication or is taking improperly.
 - Takes medications/supplements/herbs not ordered by physician
 - Has a reaction to a medication that is unusual for the client
 - If medications are dropped or mixed up

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Handout 2. Summary of Key Information

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- **The Five Rights:** Getting the wrong medication, or taking it at the wrong time, or in the wrong amount, can cause serious problems for clients. HHAs must check for “The Five Rights” whenever assisting a client with medications.

Remember the Word “TRAMP”:

T	=	The right time
R	=	The right route
A	=	The right amount
M	=	The right medication
P	=	The right person

- “Prescription” medication has to be ordered by a doctor. Always read prescription labels when assisting clients with medications. The label **MUST** include “**The Five Rights.**”
 1. **Right person.** The label tells the name of the person taking the medication. Make sure this is the client’s name.
 2. **Right medication.** The label tells which medication this is. Make sure the client is supposed to take this medication.
 3. **Right dose.** The label tells how much medication the client should take. Make sure they take this dose.
 4. **Right time.** The label tells when the client should take the medication. Make sure they take it at those times.
 5. **Right route.** The label tells how the client should take the medication. Make sure they take it in this way.

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Handout 2. Summary of Key Information

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- Prescription labels also tell:
 - When the pharmacy filled the prescription
 - The doctor's name
 - The pharmacy's name, address, telephone number, and I.D. number
 - The prescription number
 - If the prescription can be refilled
- Some of the information on a prescription label may be given in abbreviations. Here are some abbreviations found on prescription slips (or on the label):

Q.D.	=	Once a day
B.I.D.	=	Twice a day
T.I.D.	=	Three times a day
Q.I.D.	=	Four times a day
H.S.	=	At bedtime
Q.O.D.	=	Every other day
P.R.N.	=	As needed
P.O.	=	By mouth
Pt	=	Patient
P.T.	=	Physical therapist

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Worksheet 1. Find “The Five Rights” on a Prescription Label

Here’s a sample prescription label (with the name and address changed). Find and circle the 5 Rights.

CVS Pharmacy	#0329
45 Main Street	Anytown, NY 12345
Jane Doe	
63 Baker Street	Anytown, NY 12345
LORAZEPAM 0.5 MG TABLET MYL	
Substituted for Ativan 0.5 mg tablet BIO	
TAKE ONE TABLET BY MOUTH EVERY 6 TO 8 HOURS AS NEEDED	
Quantity: 15	Refills require authorization
Store Phone: 212 234-5678	
RX#: C23456	
Prescriber: Marcus Welby, M.D.	

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Worksheet 2. Find “The Five Rights” on Over-the-Counter Medication Labels

Some medications do not have to be ordered by a doctor. These medications are called “over-the-counter” or “nonprescription.” These labels are longer and harder to read, but they still contain the 5 Rights.

Here’s a sample over-the-counter label. Find and circle the 5 Rights.

DO NOT USE IF SEAL AROUND BOTTLE CAP OR NECK IS BROKEN OR MISSING
Read all product information before using.
Active ingredients (in each geltab)---Purposes Acetaminophen 200 mg—Pain reliever Aspirin 200 mg—Pain-reliever
Use: Treats migraine
Warning: Children and teenagers who...should not use this product. Consult a doctor if... Allergy alert: Aspirin may cause a severe allergic reaction...
Do not use: If allergic to any of the ingredients... Stop use and ask a doctor if an allergic reaction occurs... If pregnant or breast-feeding... Keep out of reach of children. Overdose warning...
Directions: Do not use more than directed. Adults: take 2 geltabs with a glass of water. If symptoms persist or worsen, ask your doctor. Do not take more than 2 geltabs in 24 hours, unless directed by a doctor. Under 18 years of age, ask a doctor.
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Skills Checklist 1. Assisting with the Self-Administration of Medications

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Checking the right person.
1. Wash your hands.
2. Read the container label.
3. Check the name on the label to make sure it's the client's name.
4. Check the name on the label against the name on the Care Plan.
5. If they are not the same, contact your supervisor for further instructions. Explain to the client why you're doing this.
6. If they are the same, go on to the next "right."
Checking the right medication.
7. Check the name of the medication on the label to make sure it's the same as the medication name on the Care Plan.
8. Check the expiration date.
9. If the medication is not the same as the one on the Care Plan, or the expiration date has gone by, contact your supervisor for further instructions. Explain to the client why you're doing this.
10. If the medication is the same as on the Care Plan, and the expiration date has not gone by, go on to the next "right."
Checking the right dose (amount).
11. Check the dose on the label to make sure it's the same as the dose on the Care Plan.
12. If the dose is not the same as on the Care Plan, contact your supervisor for further instructions. Explain to the client why you're doing this.
13. If the dose is the same as on the Care Plan, go on to the next "right."
Checking the right time.
14. Check the time for taking the medication against the time specified in the Care Plan.
15. If the time is not the same as on the Care Plan, contact your supervisor for further instructions. Explain to the client why you're doing this.
16. If the time is the same as on the Care Plan, go on to the next "right."

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Skills Checklist 1. Assisting with the Self-Administration of Medications

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Checking the right route.
17. Check the label to see if it lists any information about the route by which the medication should be given, and compare this to the route specified in the Care Plan.
18. If the route is not the same as on the Care Plan, or if there is NO information on the label about the route for giving the medication, contact your supervisor for further instructions. Explain to the client why you're doing this.
19. If the route is the same as on the Care Plan, give the container to the client and/or assist with administration as described in the Care Plan.
20. Record and report any problems about the medication in question.