

POISONS CONTROL INFORMATION SHEET

No. 309

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND FAMILIES EMERGENCY MEDICINES KITS

Use of Drugs from the Medical Kit

The Department of Health and Families (DHF) Emergency Medicines kit provides a range of medication which enables emergency treatment to be administered to people living and working in isolated areas. The contents of the medical kit should be made available to all persons requiring medical aid.

The kit is not solely for the use of the authorised person and their immediate family, and as such should not replace normal household or personal medical kits. No charge may be made for providing treatment from the medical kit.

The authorised person is legally responsible for the safe storage, maintenance and correct use of the medical kit. Medical kit items may be issued by the authorised person to a person whose medical condition requires its administration.

Items which are **not** Schedule 4 or Schedule 8 medication, for example Panadol, Ventolin inhalers may be used at the discretion of the authorised person according to the protocol provided.

Before using Schedule 4 (prescription only) and Schedule 8 (controlled drug) medication, for example paracetamol 500mg and codeine 30mg (Panadeine Forte), all injections, antibiotics, some eardrops, eye ointments etc **the authorised person or his/her deputy must first talk to a doctor**. The contact number of the nearest health centre or Rural Medical Practitioner should be easily accessible.

If medical advice is not available and the patient's medical condition requires it, administer the required Schedule 4 or Schedule 8 medication to treat the patient. Then, as soon as practicable after administration of the medication, report in writing (either by fax or post) to the Rural Medical Administrator in the region the following details:

- (a) time and date of administration
- (b) name of drug and quantity administered
- (c) name of patient
- (d) name of person authorising treatment
- (e) name and signature of person administering the substance

Records

In addition to the above requirements, Section 49 of the Act requires that a register is kept, showing details of use of all Schedule 4 and Schedule 8 medication. The register can be a simple exercise/note book and should show the date and time of administration of the medication, name of the patient, the medication given, the amount used, the name of the doctor who was contacted for medical advice, and the authorised person's signature.

For example:

Date	Time	Patient's name	Medication given	Amount	Doctor	Signature

Please note that these records must be kept for a minimum of 2 years. They must be provided on request to the Rural Medical Administrator and staff or to Poisons Control Inspectors.

Storage of Medical Kits

The medical kit should be stored in a secure, safe but readily accessible location and should not be subjected to extremes of temperature. Optimum storage conditions would be between 10C and 25C.

All Schedule 4 medication must be stored in an area to which unauthorised persons do not have access. Schedule 8 medication (eg morphine injection) must be stored in a locked cabinet or safe.

Checking

The contents of the medical kit should be checked regularly, preferably every month but at least every 3 months to ensure that all items are present and have not expired.

Ordering

Orders for replacement of items which have been used or have expired should be made regularly to ensure that the medical kit contents are kept up to date. Orders should be made on the DHF Emergency Medicines Kit order form and should be sent to:

- **Katherine Hospital Pharmacy** for Darwin and Katherine regions, and
- **Alice Springs Hospital Pharmacy** for the Alice Springs and Barkly region.

Validity of the Authorisation

An authorisation to possess poisons in a medical kit is valid for 1 year when the application is first made and then for 2 years for subsequent renewals. Please note the expiry date on your authorisation. An application for renewal will be sent to the authorised person approximately 1 month before the authorisation is due to expire.

Withdrawal of Authorisation

Please note that unauthorised use of S4 and S8 prescription only items, or misuse of medical kit items, or failure to store the kit in accordance with the instructions above, or failure to update the kit contents and keep adequate records, may result in withdrawal of authorisation after the provision of written due warning.

Transfer of Medical Kit Authorisation to others

When the authorised person leaves a community or pastoral property, he or she must notify Poisons Control as soon as possible so that his or her current authorisation is terminated. The new person in charge should then apply for a new authorisation.

For further details please contact:

Poison Control

Phone: (08) 8922 7341

Fax: (08) 8922 7200