

Standard:	Prescribing and Administering Medications
Approved By:	Council
Date Approved:	September 2016
Date to be Reviewed:	
Effective Date:	September 2016



GUIDELINES FOR PRESCRIBING AND ADMINISTERING MEDICATIONS for Midwives Practicing in Newfoundland and Labrador

Introduction

Midwives are required to have knowledge regarding uses, side effects, adverse reactions and interactions of any drugs and substances that may be used during pregnancy, the intrapartum, and postpartum periods. Midwives are also required to know the effects of drugs on lactating mothers and their babies. Midwives have the ability to assess the need for relief of pain and to intervene using non-pharmacological and pharmacological measures as required. In accordance with their educational preparation midwives have the ability to prescribe and administer medications by various routes including: orally, by injection, by inserting an intravenous cannula and administering intravenous fluids and medications, administering approved inhalants, topical, vaginal and rectal medications. Midwives are required to have the knowledge and skills to administer medications, including oxygen, as outlined in an approved emergency skills program. Midwives also have knowledge of the Tamper Resistant Prescription Pad (TRPP) program. Midwives with hospital privileges must be cognizant of and adhere to the policies and procedures of that hospital with regard to medication administration.

Midwives are required to have knowledge regarding medications commonly given to the newborn baby and their effects, including substances excreted through the breastmilk. Midwives are also required to know the effects of drugs that may be given to the breastfeeding mother and/or her baby and be knowledgeable about their effects on breastfeeding. In accordance with their educational preparation midwives have the ability to prescribe and administer medications to the newborn, through various routes: orally, by injection and topically, including eye prophylaxis. Midwives are required to have the knowledge and skills to administer medications, including oxygen and intravenous fluids, as outlined in the advanced neonatal resuscitation program.

For the Woman

Antibiotics for the treatment or prophylaxis of gynaecological, obstetrical, breast infections, urinary tract infections.

Antiemetics for the treatment of nausea and vomiting.

Antifungal agents for maternal vaginal, skin, breast infections.

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Agents to stimulate lactation

Topical agents

Immunizations including for Hepatitis B, Rh immunoglobulin, rubella.

Intravenous fluids

Antihistamines

Anaesthetic and Analgesic Drugs for local and systemic pain relief during labour, birth and the postpartum period. Controlled anaesthetic and analgesic drugs according to the midwifery formulary

Inhalation Agents

Contraceptives - oral, intramuscular and subcutaneous medications, and fitted contraceptive devices.

Uterotonic drugs

Emergency drugs

Over the Counter (OTC) medications commonly used in conditions associated with childbearing to include vitamins and minerals. A midwife may prescribe an over the counter medication either for the purpose of accessing a drug plan which has plan coverage for such drugs or for other benefits.

For the Newborn

Antifungal agents such as for candida albicans.

Immunizations as appropriate if the midwife's care extends to two months of age.

Ophthalmic prophylaxis not routinely recommended by the Canadian Paediatric Society.

Vitamins and Minerals

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Other

A midwife may administer other medications to be used by the woman during pregnancy and/or labour, and/or postpartum, according to the directions of a physician and renew such prescriptions, within the scope of midwifery practice and the educational preparation of the midwife.

According to the NL Midwives Regulations (2016), midwives may prescribe and administer narcotics and sedatives that are controlled drugs within the meaning of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act (Canada) as determined by the federal Department of Health.