



Gumdale State School

An Independent Public School
Always Our Best

admin@gumdaless.eq.edu.au

Phone (07) 3902 8333

Absence Line (07) 3902 8399

Principal: Phil Savill
Deputy Principal: Sarah Cracknell
Deputy Principal: Louise Hart
Deputy Principal: Daphne Gillies

677 New Cleveland Road
PO Box 6 Gumdale Q 4154
www.gumdaless.eq.edu.au

Over-the-counter medications

The Department recognises that all medications, including over-the-counter (OTC) medications, e.g. paracetamol or alternative medicines, may be drugs or poisons and may cause side effects. As such, schools are required to receive *medical authorisation* from a prescribing health practitioner (e.g. doctor, dentist, optometrist, but **not** a pharmacist) to administer **any** medication to students, including those bought *over-the-counter*.

Whilst parents may administer OTC medications to their child without medical authorisation, they are aware of the child's complete medical history, and are able to provide ongoing, direct supervision for the course of the child's illness. Due to these circumstances, a parent is also more likely to recognise if their child is having adverse effects and requires immediate medical attention.

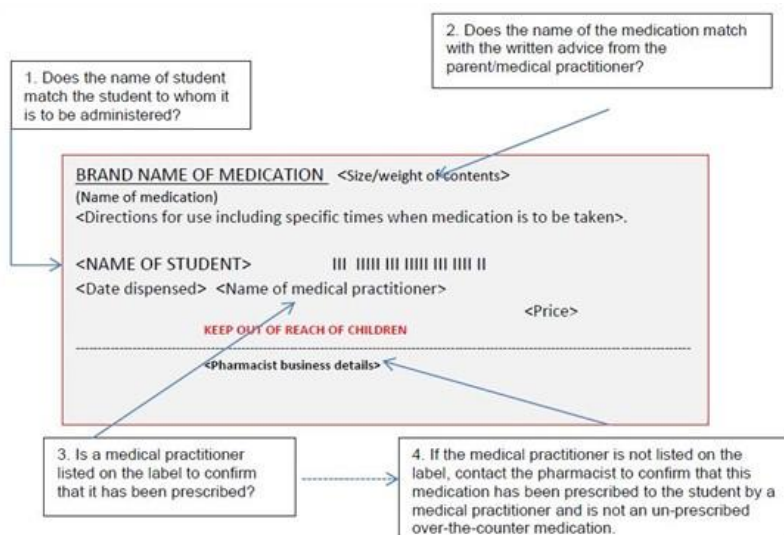
The student's prescribing health practitioner also has the knowledge of the child's medical history to determine the appropriate OTC medication to administer and is therefore able to determine dosage and provide advice regarding potential side effects or interactions with other medications.

For these reasons, OTC medications will only be administered to students at school if medical authorisation has been received.

Confirming medication has been prescribed

To administer medication to students during school or school-related activities, schools require the medication to be prescribed, which constitutes medical authorisation. Schools can confirm that medication has been prescribed by checking that:

- the original packaging is labelled 'Prescription only' or Controlled drug' (as these medications can only be sold by pharmacists on a medical practitioner's prescription); and/or
- the pharmacy label on the student's medication includes the medical practitioner's name

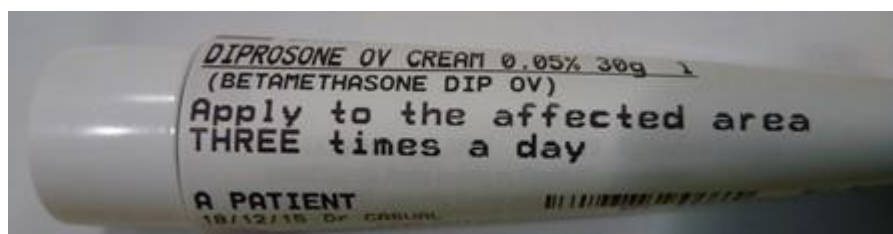


In some instances, a pharmacist may dispense prescribed medication in more than one box, but not label all boxes. In this case, a parent should request extra prescription labels to be printed by the pharmacist, as only labelled medication will be administered by the school.

Staff administer medications that are essential for the student's health. Where a school is concerned that the medication may not have been prescribed and is an OTC medication, e.g. the label does not include the name of the medical practitioner and the school has no other evidence that the medication has been prescribed (e.g. letter from the medical practitioner), the school may phone the pharmacist who dispensed the medication (named on the label) to confirm that it has been prescribed by a medical practitioner.

In the event that the pharmacist will not disclose if the medication is prescribed, the school should advise the parent that they cannot administer the medication without written authority from the student's medication practitioner.

A letter from the parent to administer medication will not suffice if medical authorisation cannot be confirmed. The parent should be advised that until medical authorisation can be confirmed, if they wish their child to receive medication during school hours, they will have to attend the school to take the responsibility for its administration.



Example of a student's prescribed medication with the names of the patient and medical practitioner on the pharmacy label