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Quality Care For Kids

A newsletter for Scott County
Child Care Providers

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Call your Child Care Nurse Consultant if you have any questions about child health and safety, or any special training needs.



In a recent study published in *Pediatrics*, there are over 63,000 medication errors annually in children under the age of six, which is about 1 child every 8 minutes. Most often medication errors occur at home and often involve the wrong dose of liquid medications being given. In a 2003 IDPH survey of Iowa child care providers, the 2 most common errors reported were missed doses (55%) and 50% reported that the medication wasn't available because it was not brought to

Medication Errors

child care.

Medication errors can lead to poor management of chronic illness (for example asthma), poor recovery from illness (example missed doses of antibiotics) and can cause severe reaction, hospitalization and even death.

Preventing medication errors by having clear medication policies, staff education, and by using a medication log is important for the health of the children in care. Healthy Child Care

Iowa has a free Monthly Medication form available at: www.idph.state.ia.us/HCCI click on the "printed products download tab".

Medication Administration in Iowa Child Care is a DHS approved course that offers 6 hours of training and also is worth 2 points on the Quality Rating System application. Go to <http://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/trainingregistry/> to search for a class in your area. For more information about safe medication administration contact your local child care nurse consultant.

Are Spacers Needed for Inhalers?

Metered dose inhalers are often prescribed for children with asthma and may be given in child care. A spacer is a tube that fits on the inhaler (see picture) so the child can breathe the medication into their lungs. For infants and young children, a mask is used on the spacer. Older children can use the spacer mouthpiece. Spacers help to increase the medication to the lungs and can help to decrease the amount of medication that sprays in the back of the throat.

The most common adverse side effects of using an inhaler without a spacer are: yeast infections in the mouth; absorption of the medication (systemically) causing increased heart rate, irritability, or tremor; and "coldfree" effect which can cause a reflex cough so

the medication does not get breathed deep into the lungs.

Children should rinse their mouth out after using an inhaler (recommended for inhalers that are corticosteroids). The spacer should be cleaned following the manufacturer instructions.

Children with inhalers should always have an "Asthma Action Plan" completed by their doctor and a copy kept on file at child care. An Asthma Action Plan includes instructions when to give the inhaler and what to do in case of emergency. Asthma Action Plans are available at: www.idph.state.ia.us/HCCI click on the "printed products download tab" or contact your local child care nurse consultant.



May is Asthma Awareness Month

- Asthma continues to be a serious public health problem according to the Centers for Disease Control.
- Asthma is one of the most common serious chronic diseases of childhood.
- It is the 3rd cause of hospitalization among children.

For more information go to www.cdc.gov/asthma