

# Handling and Storage of Pharmaceuticals Guide

The handling and storing of pharmaceuticals is a critical aspect of ensuring medication safety and effectiveness. Proper procedures must be followed to maintain the integrity of pharmaceuticals and minimise the risk of contamination or errors. This guide outlines the best practices for the correct handling and storage of pharmaceuticals.

## Training

- Ensure that all personnel involved in handling pharmaceuticals are trained in safe and proper procedures.
- Provide ongoing training and education on new medications and handling techniques.

## Receiving Pharmaceuticals

- Inspect pharmaceutical deliveries upon receipt to verify accuracy and integrity.
- Check for any signs of damage, tampering, or expiration dates.
- Record received quantities and batch/lot numbers for tracking purposes.

## Storage Conditions

- Store pharmaceuticals in a dedicated and secure area with restricted access to authorised personnel only.
- Follow manufacturer recommendations for temperature and humidity conditions and monitor and record these conditions regularly.
- Keep medications away from direct sunlight and heat sources.

## Organisation and Labelling

- Organise medications in a way that ensures easy identification and access.
- Clearly label shelves and storage containers with the medication names, strengths, and expiration dates.
- Rotate stock to use older medications first (FIFO - First-In, First-Out).

## Temperature-Sensitive Medications

- Maintain a separate storage area for temperature-sensitive medications, such as vaccines or insulin.
- Use specialised refrigerators with temperature monitoring devices.
- Ensure proper storage and handling of vaccines following the Cold Chain guidelines.

## Medication Security

- Implement security measures to prevent unauthorised access and theft of pharmaceuticals.
- Keep controlled substances in a securely locked cabinet, complying with legal requirements.

## Expiration Dates

- Regularly check and remove expired medications from storage.
- Dispose of expired medications following appropriate guidelines and regulations.

## Contamination Prevention

- Store pharmaceuticals away from chemicals, cleaning agents, and hazardous materials.
- Maintain cleanliness in the storage area and perform routine cleaning to prevent contamination.

## Handling and Dispensing

- Wash hands thoroughly before handling medications.
- Use proper techniques when counting, labelling, and dispensing medications.
- Check for allergies, interactions, and correct dosages before administering medications to patients.

## Record Keeping

- Maintain accurate records of medication inventory, including quantities received, dispensed, and on hand.
- Document any incidents, discrepancies, or medication errors.

## Emergency Response

- Develop a plan for responding to medication recalls, shortages, or emergencies.
- Ensure all personnel are trained in emergency procedures and reporting.

## Regulatory Compliance

- Adhere to local, state, and federal regulations governing the handling and storage of pharmaceuticals.
- Stay informed about updates and changes in pharmaceutical regulations.