

# Appropriate Medical Care



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0845 300 1818

## What is appropriate medical care?

There is a difference between the types of medical care which Leaders are asked to carry out. First Aid is probably the most common and describes the action taken to help a victim of an accident or injury in order to save life and secondly to limit the extent of any injuries until professional medical treatment can be administered. More detailed information on First Aid is available in *First Aid and Medical Chests FS140048* available from the Information Centre.

The second category of medical care comes under the heading of simple personal nursing care. This may be more relevant in a camp or residential situation where an individual's regular routines need to be supervised or administered. This could range from supervising the use of an inhaler to administering prescription medication. In cases such as these, permissions and further information need to be sought before the Leader is placed in a position where such a need would arise.

## Providing appropriate medical care

Legally any Leader is expected to act in the same way as a sensible adult, taking responsible care for the safety and health of those in their charge. They do not make themselves liable as long as the Leader does not prescribe prescription drugs, but merely hands them out in accordance with a doctor's prescription.

The second sensible and reasonable requirement is that the Leader is informed by the parents or carers of any individual of any specific medical

condition, medication, treatment or allergies which may need attention during the period of an activity.

A wide range of medication can be purchased without prescription over the counter at pharmacies. These should not be administered without parental consent. There are two model forms of wording for parental consent available in factsheets from the Information Centre.

*FS120081 One Day Activity Form*

*FS120082 Camp/ Holiday Information Form*

## Practical tips

There can be no substitute for knowing your Members. It is important in any Group that the Leaders know those in their charge well, are aware of the backgrounds of your Members and any particular needs they might have, but this is essential in the case of those with more pronounced needs. The information ranges from medical or toileting requirements to handling or avoiding situations that can arise from difficult behaviours or missed medication.

Personal care would not normally be undertaken by younger helpers, but under certain circumstances this may occur - where a sibling is used to performing certain tasks as a matter of routine for example.

You may want to consider an application form for Members which could emphasise the need for parents to inform you of any relevant information - some examples are available from the Programme and Development Department at Gilwell Park.

Where some Members need more assistance care must be taken to provide respect for each Member as an individual and their need for privacy and independence are essential. All medical problems and personal details should be treated as confidential whilst ensuring that anyone who has responsibility for the well being of a Member knows enough to provide the best possible care for them.

### **Child Protection and Protecting our Leaders**

When delivering some appropriate medical or nursing care of a more personal nature you will need to protect both your Members and your Leaders/Helpers. Obviously your first concern should be for the safety and security of all Members in Scouting and it goes without saying that when helping or organising activities for Members who may be particularly vulnerable either through age or particular needs, this requirement is paramount. You also need to ensure that you and other Leaders are protected and safeguarded by following a few simple, common sense guidelines.

Compliance with The Association's policy is paramount and the **Young People First** code of practice must be strictly followed by all Leaders, Helpers and Instructors. (The **Young People First** code of practice is available in pocket size card form from The Information Centre at Gilwell Park 0845 300 1818)

All Leaders, Helpers and Instructors must be aware of Child Protection issues and the rights of the individual (child or adult), to privacy and dignity.

It may sometimes be necessary for people to do things of a personal nature for individuals, particularly if they have physical or learning disabilities. These tasks should only be carried out with the full understanding and consent of parents. In an emergency situation, which requires this type of help parents should be fully informed.

### **These essential guidelines are worth agreeing with all those who help with your Group:**

- Prior to any personal care tasks being undertaken the Leader must get approval from parents or guardian regarding the level of personal care they are allowed to give and in what circumstances.
  - Seek training and advice on how to undertake the personal care - this would be best obtained from the parents, guardian or carer.
  - Leaders should ensure the Member is given privacy and treated with dignity while tasks of a personal nature are carried out. Total confidentiality must be maintained.
  - Agree with the parents/guardian who is able to undertake personal care - you must not let anyone not approved perform the duties.
  - Personal care should not be undertaken by someone who is inexperienced and who does not have the express permission of the Leader.
  - Keep other Leaders informed where you are and what you are doing - do not leave yourself open to question.
  - Record any personal care tasks undertaken giving time, date, function and if there were any problems - the parents/guardian may need this information.
  - Giving of medication should only be undertaken under strict instructions from the parents/guardian - and only given by a Leader with the appropriate expertise and who has been designated for the task.
  - Record any medication given - date, time, who gave it.
  - Ensure everyone concerned knows what to do in cases of 'anticipated emergencies' such as when a 'hypo' occurs and be aware of any 'warning signals' which the individual gets. Make sure that any emergency supplies e.g. biscuits, are accessible and their storage place is known.
- \*Hyperglycaemic (too much sugar in blood) condition can be confused with hypoglycaemic (too little sugar in blood) condition in an

emergency situation. The two conditions require different treatment.

Never administer aspirin to any child under 16 unless prescribed by a doctor.

If the young person is 16 and over and is capable of giving consent, written parental consent may not be necessary but the Leader must still be certain that the person is not allergic, is not under any other medication and does not have a stomach ulcer.

### **Further Information**

Discuss with the individual and/or parents, guardian or carer the extent to which help is needed and learn any practical tips they may have to offer

### **Support Organisations**

For information about local contacts and branches:

#### **British Red Cross**

UK Office  
44 Moorfields  
London EC2Y 9AA  
Telephone: 0870 170 7000  
Fax: 020 7562 2000  
Email: [information@redcross.org.uk](mailto:information@redcross.org.uk)  
Website: [www.redcross.org.uk](http://www.redcross.org.uk)

#### **St. John Ambulance**

National HQ  
27 St John's Lane  
London EC1M 4BU  
Telephone: 08700 10 49 50  
Fax: 08700 19 40 65  
Website: [www.sja.org.uk](http://www.sja.org.uk)

#### **St. Andrew's Ambulance Association**

St Andrew's House  
48 Milton Street  
Glasgow  
G4 0HR  
Telephone: 0141 332 4031  
Fax: 0141 332 6582  
Website: [www.firstaid.org.uk/](http://www.firstaid.org.uk/)