



High Desert Health System POLICY AND PROCEDURE

POLICY NUMBER: 327
VERSION: 2

SUBJECT: HIGH ALERT MEDICATIONS

PURPOSE: To identify a core list of high-alert medications and to increase awareness of safe medication practices when handling these medications.

POLICY: High Desert Regional Health Center is committed to promote safe medication practices for dispensing and administering High Alert Medications.

DEFINITIONS:

High Alert Medications- drugs that have a high risk of causing injury when they are misused

HIGH ALERT MEDICATION LIST

- Insulin
- Epinephrine
- Narcotics/Opiates: including fentanyl transdermal patches
- Concentrated electrolytes: injectable potassium chloride, magnesium sulfate, and sodium chloride
- IVPB Magnesium Sulfate and Potassium Chloride
- Anticoagulants (Heparin and Warfarin)
- Chemotherapy Agents (including oral methotrexate)

PROCEDURE:

1. The HDRHC Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee will review the “High-Alert Medications List” for HDRHC annually and as needed following updates to the “DHS Expected Practice: High Alert Medications” provided by DHS Medication Safety Committee and DHS Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee.
2. Safe practice recommendations will be evaluated and developed, and policies will be developed and/or revised when indicated, at least annually, to ensure our compliance.
3. Medications designated as High-Alert Medications stored in all HDRHC clinics and HDRHC Pharmacy will be marked with a “High Alert” sticker.
4. On-going education shall be provided on high-alert medication policy to medical, nursing, and pharmacy staff
5. Monitoring of high-alert medications will include review of events found in the pharmacy intervention report and in safety intelligence reports.

COMPLIANCE

Compliance will be monitored by the Pharmacy and Therapeutics Committee and the Quality Safety Committee, through medication incident reporting (i.e. Safety Intelligence) and pharmacy intervention reports. Also, the pharmacists will monitor compliance through clinic unit inspections conducted on quarterly basis.

ATTACHMENT

1. "Expected Practice: High Alert Medications" DHS Medication Safety Committee and DHS P&T Committee- updated April 2014
2. HDRHC High Alert Medication List with Safe Practice Recommendations
3. "Expected Practice: Fentanyl Transdermal Patch Standard Procedures" DHS Medication Safety Committee. August 2014.