



Practice sting 2024-04

Practice sting Wrong medicine administered

This Practical Incentive is particularly interesting for healthcare professionals who administer medicines

The notification below shows how important and necessary checks are prior to the administration of a medicine and how important it is to clean up medicines immediately after use.

Notification

A gentleman has been admitted to hospital and, according to his administration list, must receive Xalacom (latanoprost/timolol) eye drops for glaucoma. There is a bottle on the bedside table next to his bed and the gentleman indicates that these are the eye drops. The nurse does not look at the bottle and administers the drops. After some time, the gentleman indicates that his eyes are burning. The nurse sees that she has administered Sterilon instead of Xalacom eye drops.

Analysis

Before administering a medicine, a healthcare professional must check the administration list for:

- right patient
- right medicine
- correct amount
- correct presentation
- correct administration time

Before administration, the healthcare professional must also check whether the medicine is stable and has been stored correctly.

In situations where no administration list is available, for example when a physician administers a medicine from the physician's bag, the physician must check the above aspects.

The notification shows that check for the 'correct medicine' has not been carried out appropriately. It has not been checked whether the name of the medicine on the administration list corresponds to that on the vial. In all likelihood, the nurse only looked at the appearance of the bottle and saw that the appearance matched that of the eye drop bottle.

The healthcare professional who used the Sterilon to disinfect a wound, skin or an object also made a mistake. The Sterilon bottle has not been cleaned up after use. It was left on the bedside table.

Recommendations

For healthcare professionals who administer medicines

- Always be alert when administering medication.
- Before administering medication, always carry out the necessary checks above based on the administration list. Also perform these checks in special situations when there is no administration list available. If in doubt, contact the pharmacist.
- Store medicines in the accompanying box (if supplied by the pharmacy).
- Clean up medicines immediately after use.