

This is to provide some initial guidance for managers on what medications are likely to be safe when undertaking safety critical work and which medications will require a medication enquiry. This list is not all inclusive and if a medication is not included a medication enquiry is required. The advice given only deals with the medication and is not a statement of fitness for work.

Many individuals will benefit from using medicines, whether prescribed or bought over-the-counter, and are taken for various reasons, from pain control to managing long-term medical conditions. The purpose of reporting certain medications for Occupational Health advice is for the protection of the individual and others, from risk of harm or injury due to possible side effects. Due to the complexity and variables associated with taking certain medications, it is imperative that medication enquiries are undertaken.

Occupational Health can advise where use of a medicine raises doubt over an individual's capability to carry out safety critical work. Suspected abuse of alcohol or illicit drugs should be dealt with under the company's drug and alcohol policy.

At the time a medicine is dispensed or bought, the doctor/pharmacist should warn the patient of any side effects that can be expected. This may be in the form of a warning label such as '*may affect ability to drive*' or '*ability to operate machinery*'. If no explicit warning is given, individuals **should** ask directly and not assume the prescriber is aware of the job they do.

Where an individual has purchased an 'over-the-counter' medicine they can be checked against the guidance. If the medicine(s) are not listed, or the individual remains concerned about possible side effects complete a medication enquiry.

It is always important to remember that a person's own GP or specialist will prescribe a medication most suited to the condition they have.

Responsibilities

Individuals who carry out a safety critical role must notify the manager as soon as possible after being prescribed/taking a prescribed or over-the-counter medicine. This should be prior to starting work. They should also report any symptoms from an illness or medical condition which would impact on their ability to undertake safety critical duties.

Note: The individual's privacy and confidentiality must always be protected.

Medication Guidelines:

Note: Any medication enquiries which are for a new prescription or change in prescription for **insulin** must be referred to the Occupational Health for medical assessment prior to continuing with safety critical duties.

Antibiotics

These are no longer routinely used to treat infections e.g. chest infections, sore throats. If you are prescribed antibiotics you must complete the whole course.

These medications are unlikely to cause side-effects, but you will need to consider why they are being taken and whether the health condition impacts on a person's capability to undertake safety critical work. E.g. inner ear infections can be treated with an antibiotic which has no issues for safety critical work, but the ear infection may cause balance problems. The balance issue will make them unfit for safety critical work not the medication. All other antibiotics complete a medication enquiry.

Antibiotics unlikely to cause side effects		
Ampicillin	Co-trimoxazole (Septrin)	Oxytetracycline
Amoxicillin,	Doxycycline	Penicillin
Benzyl penicillin	Erythromycin	Trimethoprim
Cefalexin	Flucloxacillin	
Clarithromycin	Gentamicin	
Co-amoxiclav (Augmentin)	Minocycline	
Co-fluampicil (Magnapen)	Neomycin	

Painkillers/Analgesia

Painkillers unlikely to cause side effects		
Aspirin,	Ibuprofen	Paracetamol
Anadin	Indometacin	Piroxicam (Feldene)
Brufen	Mefenamic acid (Ponstan)	Voltarol
Diclofenac	Naproxen	
Dicloflex	Nurofen	

However, some painkillers contain opiates which make them very effective for moderate to severe pain. However, these medications can produce side effects that affect a person's ability to undertake safety critical work.

All other pain killers require a medication enquiry, for example:

Co-codamol, Codeine phosphate, Co-dydramol, Dihydrocodeine, Tramadol.

Cold/ flu relief

In most cases you can treat the symptoms of cold at home using a number of self-care techniques. These are listed below;

- Drink plenty of fluids to replace those lost due to sweating and a runny nose
- Get plenty of rest
- Eat healthily; a low-fat, high fibre diet is recommended, including plenty of fruit and vegetables
- Painkillers such as Ibrufen, Paracetamol and Aspirin are known to be effective in treating colds because they help reduce a fever and also act as painkillers. Check with your pharmacist or GP before taking a cold remedy if you are taking any other painkillers as some are already included in cold medicines
- Decongestants (medications designed to reduce nasal congestion) may have limited effectiveness against colds. These are safe as rarely cause serious side effects, however do not use them for more than seven days as overuse can make the symptoms of congestion worse.
- Only take non-sedating 'over the counter' medicines whilst in the workplace

Non drowsy medication- Cough mixture to be non-codeine based for example- Lemsip, Day Nurse.

Night Nurse and night time doses of cold and flu remedies do have a sedating effect so will need a medication enquiry.

Antihistamines

These are mainly used to control symptoms associated with allergic reactions. They cannot cure these types of conditions as they do not affect the underlying cause. They can however, provide considerable symptom relief. They are commonly used to treat hay-fever.

Antihistamines unlikely to cause side effects		
Cetirizine/ Zirtek	Fexofenadine / Telfast	Own brand, non-sedating formulas
Loratadine /Claritiyn	Acrivastine/ Benadryl	

All sedating antihistamines are **NOT** suitable for safety critical work

Eye/Ear drops

These can be used to treat irritation caused by allergies or infections.

Eye drops may cause transitory blurring of vision when they are first applied, and distorted hearing for ear drops. Care must be taken when they are first applied. It would not normally prevent safety critical working unless the underlying reasons for their use is for a disturbance to vision or reduced hearing. If there is a prolonged side effect with the medication administration and use, then a person would not be fit for safety critical work. Please consider carefully if driving.

The following are all suitable as long as no impairment to vision or hearing is experienced. Refer to Occupational Health for assessment if any effects on sight or hearing.

Ear and Eye drops unlikely to cause side effects		
Chloramphenicol	Gentisone	Otomize
Dry eyes	Optrex	Predsol

Miscellaneous

The following are commonly prescribed or purchased over the counter and so long as the individual feels fit to continue working, will not prevent safety critical activities being undertaken;

Other medications unlikely to cause side effects		
Acyclovir,	Folic acid	Milk of Magnesium
Allopurinol	Furosemide	Navispare
Atorvastatin	Fybogel	Nystatin
Atenolol	Gaviscon	Omeprazole
Becotide	Gastrocote	Prednisolone
Bendrofluazide	Hydrocortisone	Pulmicort inhaler
Bricanyl	Innovace	Pyridoxine (Vitamin B6)
Captopril	Intal	Ranitidine (Zantac)
Co-amilozide	Lactulose	Salbutamol inhaler
Duphalac	Lasix	Simvastatin
Enalapril	Lansoprazole	Senna
Ferrous Sulphate	Mebeverine	Terbutaline
Fluconazole	Metformin <i>All newly diagnosed diabetics/ or those changing medication to be referred to Occupational Health</i>	Ventolin
		Zovirax

Malaria

The following are suitable with safety critical work;

Malaria medication unlikely to cause side effects		
Doxycycline (Vibramycin),	Proguanil with Atovaquone (Malarone),	Pyrimethamine with Dapsone (Maloprim).

The following require a medication enquiry for example- **Chloroquine (Avloclor), Mefloquine**

Herbal Medication

Herbal medication and Cannabidiol (CBD) are not endorsed by Occupational Health but the following medications which have medical literature behind them are therefore permitted.

Multi-vitamins, Glucosamine, Cod Liver Oil, Well Women, Well Man, Omega Fish Oils.