Safe Medications Principles

1. Prescription errors can be minimized by observing all of the following practices, EXCEPT for:
   a. Specifying concentration
   b. Using abbreviations
   c. Noting the patient's age and, when appropriate, weight
   d. Writing legibly

2. Regarding prescription instructions, nurses should:
   a. Give the patient website addresses where he or she can learn more about the drug
   b. Explain what the medication is and does, as well as its potential side effects
   c. Tell the patient to read the detailed sheet that accompanies the medication
   d. Do nothing, it just confuses the patient

3. Why should numbers / quantities for controlled substances be fully written?
   a. To prevent alterations by the patient
   b. To use up more space on the prescription form
   c. Numbers written out are more legible
   d. To help the pharmacist understand the prescription

4. Since the dosage amounts "5 mg" and "5.0 mg" mean the same thing, nurses can use them interchangeably.
   True        False

5. Nurses are not doctors or pharmacists; therefore they don’t need to know much about the drugs they are giving to their patients / clients.
   True        False
6. Which of the following is most important to check prior to administering a medication to a patient?

   a. Medical condition  
   b. Vital signs  
   c. Allergy status  
   d. Other prescription medications  
   e. Over-the-counter drugs being taken

7. When checking to see that you have the right patient for medication administration, you should ask the patient whether he is “Mr. John Smith?”

   True  False

8. If a drug calculation is required, this should be documented and retained within the patient’s notes.

   True  False

9. A nurse should delay administration if she is unsure of the clinical condition of the patient in relation to the drug to be given.

   True  False

10. Which area of medication administration is most commonly neglected and is frequently the subject of investigations by professional nursing regulatory bodies?

    a. Record keeping  
    b. Dosage calculations  
    c. Routes of administration  
    d. Drug given to the wrong patient

11. Any drug errors must be reported as soon as recognized to minimize the possible negative outcomes.

    True  False
12. A nurse who makes a medication error could face disciplinary action by the employer, the professional regulatory body, and may be subject to criminal and/or civil prosecution.
   True False

13. A medication is any substance or combination of substances having properties for the prevention or treatment of diseases in human beings.
   True False

14. It is acceptable to crush tablets to make it easier for patient to swallow.
   True False

15. Parenteral drug administration refers to drugs given via the digestive tract.
   True False

16. Parenteral drugs should be prepared immediately before use by the person administering them.
   True False

17. Injecting 0.9% saline or 5% dextrose is an approved method to check whether IV access is working.
   True False

18. Venous cannulae not being used should be removed to minimize infection.
   True False

19. Drug calculations for children should be based on actual body weight.
   True False
20. A nurse should check the medication package three times before giving the drug, and once more before she tosses the packaging into the trash can.

True    False

21. If a patient says that this is not the medication they are supposed to receive, reassure them that it is the correct medication and insist that they take it.

True    False

22. Some of the possible complications of an IV site are:

   a. Infection
   b. Infiltration
   c. Extravasation
   d. Phlebitis
   e. Clotting

23. One of the most common mistakes in administering IV medications is:

   a. Not following correct aseptic procedures
   b. Wrong dosage / strengths
   c. Not monitoring patient for effects of the drug
   d. Administering the drug too quickly

24. The age of the patient can be important in deciding the correct medication dose.

True    False

25. Some drug therapies can interact with oral contraceptives and potentially result in an unwanted pregnancy.

True    False

26. Loss of function in which of the following body systems can affect prescribing safety?

   a. Reduction in kidney function
   b. Impaired liver metabolism
   c. Impaired mobility due to weak bones and muscles
   d. Impaired cognitive function
27. The nurse should check to see what non-prescription or botanical medications the patient may be taking and note these on the patient’s record.

   True     False

28. A nurse must ensure that her patient has relevant information / warnings concerning the medication and its action, any side effects and how to report them.

   True     False

29. Injectable medicines should be for single use only.

   True     False

30. Medication packaging should be broken while at the nurses’ station or in the med room and dropped into a pill cup.

   True     False

31. The cap of the IV catheter should be removed well in advance of its insertion.

   True     False

32. The purpose of a PICC (peripherally inserted central catheter) dressing is to:

   a. Control bleeding
   b. Prevent infection
   c. Absorb blood and wound drainage
   d. Protect wound from further injury
Answer Key to Safe Medications Principles: Quiz 1

Q01  b
Q02  b
Q03  a
Q04  F  5.0 mg can be mistaken for 50 mg; never use the .0 as it can result in dosage errors.
Q05  F  A nurse should NEVER administer a drug about which she knows very little or nothing; her knowledge should be at a level that she is able to question any uncertainty in the dose, route of administration, frequency and potential interactions with other medicines being taken.
Q06  c  Check the patient’s chart to see if any allergy status is recorded. If not, be sure to ask the patient. Also remember to check the drug’s generic and brand names to avoid inadvertent administration.
Q07  F  Many older patients who are hard of hearing will simply nod their head and say “Yes.” The correct identification procedure is to ask them their name. Remember to use at least one other approved identifier as well.
Q08  T
Q09  T  For example, digoxin should not be given if the patient’s pulse is below 60 beats per minute.
Q10  a  Nurses must know and follow professional codes and employer’s guidelines on medication administration record keeping.
Q11  T  Use the employer’s incident reporting forms and follow their policies.
Q12  T
Q13  T
Q14  F  Tablets should NEVER be crushed unless the manufacturer has specifically identified crushing as a suitable method to administer the medication.
Q15  F  Parenteral drugs are administered by injection or infusion.
Q16  T  Unless the drugs are available ready prepared and labeled in prefilled syringes.
Q17  T
Q18  T  Unless they are being kept for a specific reason.
Q19  F  Drug calculations for children should be based on ideal body weight and not the actual body weight; the reason is that in an obese child, it is not unusual for the total daily dosage to exceed the adult dosage when calculations are based on a per kilogram weight.

Q20  T

Q21  F  Never argue with a patient who tells you he or she is not supposed to receive the medication; apologize and reassure the patient that you will go back and check again.

Q22  a,b,c,d,e

Q23  d

Q24  T  This is particularly important in the very young and older patients. It is essential to check doses for particular age groups since even small doses of opiates and iron can be harmful in young children.

Q25  T  These include anti-epileptics and antibiotics.

Q26  a,b  Changes in kidney and liver function can affect drugs excreted or metabolized.

Q27  T  Many over-the-counter and herbal remedies interact with prescription-only drugs.

Q28  T

Q29  T  Unless the label specifically indicates that they are licensed and suitable for multi-dosing.

Q30  F  The packaged medication should be taken to the patient’s bedside and the drug name and dosage compared with the written order.

Q31  F  The caps should NOT be removed until just prior to insertion to prevent contamination of the catheter.

Q32  a,b,c,d  ALL of these are functions of a PICC dressing.