

Over the Counter Medication A Clear Understanding

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Whilst we are away at camp or during an activity there may be times when a child becomes unwell. We must always do what is best for the child and this may mean we need to administer medication such as paracetamol, Calpol anti histamines etc. some leaders get worried that this is against the law or things can go wrong.

1. Remember! it is over the counter medication if you read and follow the instruction all will be ok! Get someone else to double check? Only administer over the counter medication suitable for the age and requirements of the person / child
2. To simply refuse a child medication on the grounds of "I may get sued" is neglect. We may not be able to contact a parent, or the distance may mean it is impossible for a parent to attend to the child.
3. We all know the magical power of a spoon of Calpol!

Should the need arise where we would need to give medication to a child, we would try to contact the parent in the first instance and inform them that their child may be unwell, and we would like to give them some medication. At this point we would explain the problem and the medication (including brand name) that we would like to give.

e.g. Dear Parent, Jack has a bad head and temperature we would like to give 10 ml of Calpol and then monitor and re administer if needed. Is this, ok?

At this point we would follow the parents' wishes and keep them informed regularly on the condition of the child should they improve or worsen and then decide if the child needs to go home.

Remember we can only advise the child to take the medication and assist them if needed we cannot force them to take it. Likewise, if a parent asks us not to administer medication, we again must respect their wishes.

If we cannot contact a parent or emergency contact for the child, then you must check the camp form for any allergies to medication and then the medication can be administered and then the parent advised at the earliest opportunity. In this instance, you have done what is best for the child! To hold back until you contact a parent may mean unnecessary suffering for the child.

Once medication is given then a medication form needs to be completed for all doses of medication. And then shown to the parent at the end of camp and ask them to sign the form.

**If in doubt, then contact NHS 111 for advice.
In an emergency do not be afraid 999 if needed!**

A point to note! If you ring a parent and tell them, you wish to give 'jack' 10ml of Calpol then it must be Calpol! You cannot then give for example ASDA's alternative to Calpol. Always use the brand name and medication name when speaking to parents.