

Careful Sales of Medicines



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In the previous article we have discussed different types of medicines and Care card. Today we will discuss careful sales of medicines principles as the pharmacy staff members are responsible for the healthcare and safety of their customers.

They need to show that they understand and can respond to them in a caring way, because:

- medicines are products used to treat or prevent human (or animal) illness,
- medicines are designed to relieve the symptoms,
- medicines are safe when sold responsibly and used correctly,
- all medicines are less safe when used incorrectly, for example when the recommended dosage is exceeded,
- some groups of patients are more at risk from incorrect use of medicines than others, usually because they tolerate medicines less well, such as:
 - young children
 - pregnant and breastfeeding women
 - elderly adults
 - people with conditions like diabetes

Careful, when we talk about the sale of medicines, has two meanings that we can explore now.

CAREFUL: CARING

The customer you are dealing with may be ill themselves or have

someone close to them who is ill. Your caring attitude often determines whether you really help them or not. We all appreciate someone showing they care, and your customer needs to feel you care from the outset. This will reinforce their feeling of trust in your final recommendation.

CAREFUL: SELLING MEDICINES AND ADVISING CORRECTLY

Because we are dealing with people's health and are trusted by them we must ensure that we take great care to advise them properly. This advice includes not only what to take but also when they should seek further help.

Careful selling with special groups of customers

All of your customers are individuals and it is likely that, even given the same set of symptoms or requests for the same named medicine, you will need to respond differently to each customer and understand how their individual circumstances affect the recommendation of a medicine.

We think it could be unwise to sell a medicine in the following circumstances and help find a solution for your customer:

- if the medicines might interact with another medicine the person is already taking
- to someone who is pregnant
- where the effects of the medicine itself might cause problems or even danger for the person e.g. a hay fever preparation which causes drowsiness, to a lorry driver
- where the person has been suffering the symptoms for more than a few days and they are worsening
- an adult medicine which was going to be given to a child
- to a young person under the age of 16
- to someone who might be abusing the medicine e.g. codeine linctus.

These circumstances can generally be divided into three areas, to help us take a closer look at the reasons we need to be careful for special groups of customers they are:

- things to do with people
- things to do with the medicine
- things to do with the illness



THINGS TO DO WITH PEOPLE

There are certain groups to watch out for:

Elderly people

Elderly people are much more likely than anyone else to be taking other medicines, either purchased or prescribed, which could interact with the medicine they are now purchasing. If your patient is elderly, you should check if they are taking anything else. If they are, pharmacist needs to check that there would be no problem with the medicine being requested.

Children

Children are less able to tolerate high doses of medicines than adults and there are specific problems with some medicines such as aspirin and iron.

Pregnant and breastfeeding women

The general advice given by doctors is that during pregnancy it is best to avoid taking medicines as far as possible. Anyone asking for advice on medicines during pregnancy or breastfeeding should be referred to the pharmacist.

THINGS TO DO WITH THE MEDICINE

Problems can arise when someone is taking more than one kind of medicine. This could happen when someone, already taking medicine prescribed by their doctor, wishes to buy an over-the-counter medicine. For example, aspirin can cause problems for certain diabetics and for people taking certain medicines (blood thinning anti-coagulant drugs) prescribed for heart conditions. Some antacid preparations can interact with certain antibiotics making the antibiotic ineffective. Also, over-the-counter medicines can reduce or reinforce the action of another over-the-counter medicine. For example, a patient who is already taking a cough mixture containing an antihistamine now requires a travel sickness preparation. If an antihistamine travel sickness preparation is sold there could be a danger of overdose and certainly of excessive drowsiness.

THINGS TO DO WITH THE ILLNESS

Most of the ailments for which our customers are buying medicines are simple

VOCABULARY WITH FREE TRANSLATION SLOVNÁ ZÁSoba S VOĽNÝM PREKLADOM

careful sales of medicines principles
princípy starostlivého (opatrného) predaja liekov

medicines are designed to relieve the symptoms
lieky sú vyrobené (dizajnované) na úľavu od príznakov

exceeded recommended dosage
prekročené odporúčané dávkovanie

all medicines are less safe when used incorrectly
všetky lieky sú menej bezpečné, ak sa užívajú nesprávne

some patients tolerate medicines less well
niektorí pacienti tolerujú lieky menej dobre

young children

malé deti

pregnant and breastfeeding women

tehotné a kojace ženy

elderly (retired) patients

starší pacienti (dôchodcovia)

people with conditions like diabetes

ľudia s ochorením ako je cukrovka

caring attitude

starostlivý prístup

your customers need to feel you care about them
Vaši zákazníci potrebujú cítiť, že Vám na nich záleží

when they should seek further help

kedy majú vyhľadať ďalšiu pomoc

different response to the same set of symptoms

odlišné odporúčanie (odpoveď) na rovnaký súbor príznakov

individual circumstances of the patient affect the recommendation of a medicine

problems. Medicines help relieve symptoms and make people feel better while the normal healing processes in the body get to work. There are two important things to be alerted to and, if necessary, referred to the pharmacist.

Duration and severity of symptoms

Symptoms which last more than just a few days or are persistent; say a cough or perhaps stomach pains which have not gone away even though the customer has tried something. You should be particularly alert to this if the customer says the symptoms are getting worse. Your customers will often readily provide this kind of information as you

osobné okolnosti pacienta ovplyvňujú to, aký liek im bude odporúčaný

medicines might interact with each other
lieky môžu medzi sebou navzájom interagovať

worsening of the symptoms

zhoršenie príznakov

adult medicine given to a child

liek pre dospelého podaný dieťaťu

young person under the age of 16

mladá osoba vo veku pod 16 rokov

someone who might be abusing the medicine
niekto, kto môže zneužiť liek

the reasons we need to be careful for special groups of customers

dôvody, pri ktorých musíme byť opatrní u špeciálnych skupín zákazníkov

children are less able to tolerate high doses of medicines

deti sú menej schopné tolerovať vysoké dávky liekov

aspirin can cause problems for diabetics
aspirín môže spôsobiť problémy u diabetikov

antacids can make certain antibiotics ineffective

antacidá môžu spôsobiť neúčinnosť určitých antibiotík

duration and severity of symptoms

trvanie a intenzita (závažnosť) príznakov

symptoms which last more than just a few days or are persistent, or are getting worse

príznaky, ktoré trvajú viac ako pár dní alebo sú trvalé, alebo sa zhoršujú

to develop a rapport with customer

vytvoriť si vzťah so zákazníkom

Warning Symptoms

If, during conversation with your customer you find evidence of any of the warning symptoms found in the Sale of Medicines Protocol, the pharmacist must be involved as it is highly likely the patient will need to be referred to their doctor. All sales of medicines in a pharmacy are controlled by a written protocol: Sale of Medicines Protocol. This protocol consists of written instructions laying down approved procedures, which must be followed when selling medicines and giving advice. We will discuss this protocol in the next article.