



October 2008 Newsletter

Chemist On Call will soon celebrate 5 years of checking medication for our Rail, Construction and Distribution clients. During this time we have identified a number of seasonal medication themes and this newsletter outlines those for the winter months.

Remember

All medications should be checked by Chemist On Call. If you are taking a **NEW** medication, please update your record of **ALL** medications, even if you have called in previously. Prescription, over-the-counter, herbal and sports medications can have contra-indications if taken together. This will ensure you meet the **Railway Group Standard GE/RT8070**.

Colds & Flu

Sniffles, sore throat, cough, aches and pains... Not many people escape the typical symptoms of colds & flu. In most cases, we can carry on working, taking simple over-the-counter remedies such as **decongestants, cough mixture, analgesia and ear, eye or nose drops**.

It is not unusual for coughs to last for a few weeks, by taking cough remedies you may ease and possibly reduce the time span of the cough. **Dry or tickly cough** remedies sometimes contain antitussive medication which can cause drowsiness or dizziness. If the cough phlegm is coloured green or yellow it is recommended for the individual to visit their GP.

Make sure that you chose remedies that do not restrict your duties. Check the label and instructions for use, ask the pharmacist or GP for advice, telling them your job role and whether or not you are safety critical, show your Chemist On Call card to ensure that you are recommended appropriate medication.

Every medication, no matter how insignificant you feel it might be, must be checked with Chemist On Call. You could be surprised at how many cough mixtures/decongestants restrict duties and quite simply, you've picked up the version that causes drowsiness.

Bathroom Cabinet Medication

There may have been a time in the past that you needed medication, but did not finish it so stored it in your cabinet. If you start taking this medication again, you must update your record and check alongside any other medication you are taking. For example, if you have taken a strong painkiller in the past, then stopped when pain subsided, but dipped into the supply again when pain returned, you will not be covered on your old medication check.



Over Indulgence

Yes, we are coming into the Christmas party season and no doubt, some employees will enjoy too much alcohol or too much food.

Remember, **do not drink and drive/operate machinery**. Alcohol can remain in your system, reducing your reaction times, for several hours, in many cases still affecting your ability to drive the following morning. Ensure you remain hydrated by drinking water.

Alcohol interacts with almost all medication, increasing the risks of accidents or injury and reducing the effectiveness of medication. If you are taking medication to control a condition and you drink alcohol, you may become unwell, i.e. mixing some medication and alcohol can have severe effects on vital organs.

Headaches

If you need to take medication for a headache, ensure it is appropriate, i.e. **simple aspirin, paracetamol or ibuprofen**. Do not take several products that contain **paracetamol** as there is a risk of overdosing. If you are allergic to **aspirin**, especially asthmatics, do not take. Remember, there are many headache remedies on the market that promote – “fastest pain relief” or “strongest pain killer on the market” – these will normally restrict your duties as they contain additional substances such as **codeine** which causes drowsiness. Some medications will make your symptoms worse or cause other side effects.

Indigestion

There are many over-the-counter remedies for indigestion, relieving symptoms of heartburn, pain due to fullness, sickness and flatulence. These include **antacids** to neutralise acid and **H2 blockers** that reduce the amount of acid that the stomach produces, both can be recommended by your local pharmacist. If symptoms persist you should see your GP.

Typical Questions

- I do not know my PIN.
 - Your line manager, HR Department or Health & Safety Manager will be able to provide a PIN. We can not perform a check without a PIN.
- How can I check single medications?
 - Visit www.chemist-on-call.com, login using your PIN, search for the medication, download the form, complete, email and print for proof of check.
- How can I check single and multi-medications?
 - Call **08456 773001** - 24 hours/365 days per week for advice within 1 hour.