

<b>SECTION 8A: CLINICAL PRACTICES</b>	<b>POLICY: 8A.6</b>
<b>POLICY: MEDICATION REACTIONS AND SIDE EFFECTS</b>	<b>PAGE: 1 OF: 3</b>

**PURPOSE:**

- To ensure appropriate action is initiated as soon as possible whenever a significant change in the client’s status occurs.
- To ensure appropriate action is taken for general medication reactions and side effects.
- To ensure all members of a client’s care team are notified when significant changes to client status or medication reactions occur.

**POLICY:**

- Significant changes in the client’s condition and/or medication reactions will be immediately reported to the client’s attending pharmacy and/or physician by an agency representative.

**PROCEDURE – SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN CONDITION:**

- The physician’s office and/or attending pharmacy will be called as soon as the nurse identifies a significant change in patient condition
- Examples of significant changes that should be reported include, but are not limited to:
  - Deviations in client’s normal baseline vital signs
    - If patient’s normal baseline vitals are unknown, refer to chart:

Age	Heart Rate	Resp Rate	Systolic BP	Diastolic BP	Temp
Birth – 1 yr	110 - 130	20 - 40	50 - 80	30 - 60	98 - 100
Pediatric	80 - 110	20 - 30	80 - 120	50 - 80	96.8 - 99.6
Adult	60 - 100	20 - 30	80 - 120	60 - 80	96.8 - 99.6

*Highly dependent on patient's physical/health status*

- Deviations in a client’s normal blood sugar or blood sugar that is above or below physician’s parameters
- Weight loss of greater than five (5) pounds in two (2) weeks, which is inexplicable

Policies & Procedures



Reference: PDN Policy 8021

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- Weight gain of more than two (2) pounds per day, which is inexplicable
- Upper respiratory congestion
- Increased shortness of breath
- Cough for more than one (1) week or expectorating blood tinged, green or yellow sputum
- Increase in edema
- Change in client's urinary habits to include incontinence, burning, urgency, frequency
- Change in client's bowel habits to include diarrhea for more than two (2) days
- Bloody stools
- Intractable oozing of blood
- Change in client's skin integrity including new Stage II pressure ulcer or deterioration of present pressure ulcer
- Any side effect of new medication
- Deviations in a client's normal level of consciousness
- Pain uncontrolled with current medications
- Onset of acute pain
- Changes in ability to ambulate and performance of activities of daily living
- Possible signs of infection, such as fever, redness, swelling or drainage
- Change in a client's normal appetite
- Any change in a client's condition that the nurse thinks is necessary to bring to the physician's attention

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**PROCEDURE – MEDICATION REACTIONS:**

- Reactions can vary in severity from mild to severe (see chart).
- All reactions are documented and handled per pharmacy/physician recommendations and/or orders.
  - The physician’s office and/or attending pharmacy will be called as soon as the nurse identifies a moderate to severe reaction to medication(s) being administered.

<b>MILD</b> (Can be expected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headache (pain rate 1-5/10)</li> <li>• Mild nausea (not interfering with daily routine)</li> <li>• Fatigue or flu-like symptoms</li> <li>• Diarrhea</li> <li>• Low-grade fever (&lt;101)</li> <li>• Itching skin</li> <li>• Mild back pain/achiness</li> </ul>
<b>MODERATE</b> (Reportable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headache (pain rate 5-7 /10) lasting more than 24 hours</li> <li>• Nausea/vomiting interfering with daily activities</li> <li>• Diarrhea lasting 24 hours or more</li> <li>• Hives or fatigue affecting daily activity</li> <li>• Decreased urine output or dark urine</li> <li>• New onset of foot swelling</li> </ul>
<b>SEVERE</b> (Seek immediate medical attention)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Severe headache with pain reported as intolerable and/or severe headache with neck stiffness</li> <li>• Sensitivity to light</li> <li>• Chest pain</li> <li>• Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath</li> <li>• Uncontrollable vomiting/diarrhea</li> <li>• Mental status changes such as unresponsiveness</li> <li>• Fever (&gt;101)</li> <li>• Chills</li> </ul>