
Nystatin for prophylaxis of *Candida albicans* infections of the oral cavity in adult oncology and haematology patients

SESLHDPR/461**POLICY STATEMENT**

The Registered Nurse (RN) / Registered Midwife (RM) is authorised to instigate nurse/midwife-initiated medication without an authorised prescriber's order under the specific circumstances set out in the **INDICATIONS** section and provided there are no contraindications present.

It is important for nursing and midwifery staff to remain aware that:

- Minor ailments may be symptoms of other more serious diseases or may be adverse reactions to medication already prescribed
- Nurse-initiated medication may interact with the patient's prescribed medication
- The maximum daily recommended dose of the medication must not be exceeded¹

The administering nurse/midwife must record the administration on an approved paper or electronic medication chart, clearly indicating that the medicine was nurse initiated.

If the patient continues to require the medication (i.e., more than four doses in 24 hours) then a medical officer (MO) must be consulted and a regular or PRN order obtained.

A change in the patient's condition such as newly occurring or increasing severity of symptoms must be reported to the MO and investigated.

INDICATIONS

Prevention of infection of the oral cavity caused by *Candida albicans* in adult oncology/haematology patients receiving chemotherapy \pm radiotherapy.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

Known hypersensitivity to nystatin

PRECAUTIONS

Prophylaxis with nystatin would not be necessary if a patient was already using amphotericin lozenges.

Nystatin oral drops are safe to use in pregnancy and lactation.

HISTORY/ASSESSMENT

Perform an oral assessment. Use a systematic approach starting at one section of the mouth and work around the oral cavity. Check the lips, tongue, sides, mouth roof, gums, and teeth.

Referral to a medical officer is necessary if the patient already has visible oral fungal areas, or lesions that appear infected. These should be swabbed and sent for microbiology, culture, and sensitivity.

NURSE/MIDWIFE INITIATED MEDICINE PROTOCOL

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PROTOCOL/ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES

Caution: CHECK for allergies and/or contraindications			
Drug	Dose	Route	Frequency
Nystatin 100,000 units/mL oral drops	1 mL	Buccal	Four times a day (up to 4 doses)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shake the bottle well before use - The dose should be held in the mouth and swirled around for as long as possible before swallowing. - To be used after meals and at bedtime. 			

MONITORING - POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS/INTERACTIONS

Nystatin oral drops are well tolerated. If irritation or sensitisation develops, treatment should be stopped.

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea have been reported with nystatin, but symptoms are more severe with doses higher than those usually used for oropharyngeal candidiasis

Rash including urticarial have been reported rarely.

Stevens-Johnson syndrome has been reported very rarely. Hypersensitivity, angioedema, including facial oedema have been reported.

Nystatin is not known to interact with other medicines.

DOCUMENTATION

A record of the administration must be made on the approved paper or electronic medication chart noting that the medication was nurse initiated.

A further record of the medication administered including indication, dose and effect must be included in the patient's health care record.

PRACTICE POINTS

- Administer after mouth cleansing / other mouth washes

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

1. [NSW Health Policy Directive Medication Handling PD2022_032](#)
2. [Australian Medicines Handbook](#). Nystatin. South Australia: Australian Medicines Handbook Pty Ltd, January 2023.
3. [MIMs Online](#). Nilstat Oral Drops®. 01 December 2022.

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REVISION and APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Version Number	Author and Approval
July 2015	DRAFT	Pharmacy Department, Prince of Wales Hospital
September 2015	1	Approved by SESLHD Drug & QUM Committee
May 2018	DRAFT 2	Reviewed by nursing and pharmacy staff. Minor wording updates made. References updated.
July 2018	2	Approved by SESLHD Quality Use of Medicines Committee
August 2021	DRAFT 3	Reviewed by nursing and pharmacy staff. No changes required.
September 2021	3	Approved by SESLHD Quality Use of Medicines Committee
June 2023	DRAFT 4	NSW Medicines Formulary reviewed. Reviewed by nursing and pharmacy staff.
September 2023	4	Approved by SESLHD Drug and Therapeutics Committee