

Sodium chloride 0.9 % irrigation for cleansing of wounds

SESLHDPR/472

POLICY STATEMENT

The Registered Nurse (RN), Registered Midwife (RM) or Enrolled Nurse (EN) 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.

An Enrolled Nurse (EN) may administer 'nurse-initiated medication' to children greater than 16 years and adults. The EN must confirm verbally with their supervising Registered Nurse prior to the administration that the medication is appropriate and safe for the patient. An EN with a notation because they do not hold board approved qualifications in the administration of medicines is NOT authorised to administer any medication.

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 exceeded.¹

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

If the patient continues to require the medication (i.e., more than two doses in 24 hours) then a medical officer 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

Cleansing of wounds

CONTRAINDICATIONS

Do not use unless the solution is clear and the seal is intact.

PRECAUTIONS

For external use only

HISTORY/ASSESSMENT

Assess wound suitability for cleansing

NURSE/MIDWIFE INITIATED MEDICINE PROTOCOL**Sodium chloride 0.9 % irrigation for cleansing of wounds****SESLHDPR/472****PROTOCOL/ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES**

Caution: CHECK for allergies and/or contraindications			
Drug	Dose	Route	Frequency
Sodium chloride 0.9% for irrigation	As needed	Topical	Once or as per protocol
Rinse wound to cleanse it			

MONITORING - POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS/INTERACTIONS

Monitor wound for signs of healing or infection

DOCUMENTATION

A record of the administration must be made on the approved paper or electronic medication chart or wound care plan 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

Nil

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

1. [NSW Health Policy Directive Medication Handling PD2022_032](#)
2. [MIMs Online](#). Sodium Chloride (0.9%) for Irrigation Solution BP (Baxter). 01 July 2014

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REVISION and APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Version Number	Author and Approval
July 2015	DRAFT	Pharmacy Department, St George 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
September 2021	DRAFT 3	Reviewed by nursing and pharmacy staff.
October 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
August 2025	5	Approved by SESLHD Drug and Therapeutics Committee