

NURSE/MIDWIFE INITIATED MEDICINE PROTOCOL

Zinc oxide-based products for haemorrhoids, anal pruritus, or fissure in adults (Anusol®/Hemocane®/Rectinol®)

SESLHDPR/478

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 exceeded.¹

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 two 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

Symptomatic relief of pain and/or itching associated with haemorrhoids, anal pruritus or fissure in adult patients.

CONTRAINDICATIONS

- Bleeding
- Broken skin
- Hypersensitivity to local anaesthetics or other ingredients

PRECAUTIONS

- Some products contain local anaesthetic
- Pregnancy or breastfeeding -safe to use

HISTORY/ASSESSMENT

Assess for bleeding or skin irritation - seek medical advice if present.

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PROTOCOL/ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES

Caution: CHECK for allergies and/or contraindications			
Drug	Dose	Route	Frequency
Zinc oxide +/- local anaesthetic* contained in Anusol® or Hemocane® or Rectinol®	Apply rectal ointment to affected area	Topical	Up to twice
	OR		
	ONE suppository	Rectal	Once
*For practical and safety purposes these medicines should be prescribed by brand name.			
Using PPE, apply after a bowel motion. Ensure outside wrap is removed from suppository prior to use and insert slowly apex first.			

MONITORING - POTENTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS/INTERACTIONS

Monitor skin integrity and for any sign of bleeding.
Local anaesthetic content may sensitise the perianal skin.

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

- Onset of action is 5 to 10 minutes
- Avoid constipation and prolonged straining
- Increase fibre and fluid intake
- Reduce irritation by keeping area clean and dry
- Avoid irritants such as heat, moisture, stress or local irritants (e.g., faeces, sweat, soap, perfumes, topical products, rough toilet paper and nylon clothing)
- Dietary alteration may be useful if itching is related to certain foods or drinks.
Consider dietitian review if appropriate
- Simple emollients such as sorbolene cream applied after cleansing may help
- Use warm salt baths after bowel movements if possible

REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

1. [NSW Health Policy Directive Medication Handling PD2022_032](#)
2. Australian Medicines Handbook. [Anorectal products](#). South Australia: Australian Medicines Handbook Pty Ltd, Last modified July 2025.

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REVISION and APPROVAL HISTORY

Date	Version Number	Author and Approval
July 2015	DRAFT	Pharmacy Department, The Sutherland 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
August 2025	5	Approved by SESLHD Drug and Therapeutics Committee