

Medication Aide Skills Assessment Review Guide

Provided by Clarkson College
Office of Professional Development
professionaldevelopment@clarksoncollege.edu

Medication Aide Skills Assessment Study Guide

Skills Assessments are designed to validate that an individual understands and can safely and accurately perform the skills required to function as a medication aide.

Review all of the skills provided in this study guide.

When demonstrating a skill, candidates must perform 70% of that skill's steps and 100% of the **“critical steps”** in order to pass the skill. These steps add up in points for each skill. Candidates must pass every skill in the group chosen to pass the skills assessment. Candidates may not ask questions of the tester, and the tester may not provide assistance with skills.

Skill steps may have changed or been added since you last performed medication aide tasks. To prepare for the skills assessment, please study the enclosed checklists. Review and practice **all** of the steps listed for each skill. “Critical steps” may not be the same for all skills. **“Critical steps” are in bold.**

Prior to starting a medication aide task and when finishing a medication aide task, it is always important to remember the beginning and ending procedures. **During skills assessments candidates must state or demonstrate each beginning and ending procedure.** Points from your skill score will be deducted if the procedure is not stated or demonstrated.

Know normal ranges for vital signs – and at the end of each skill state that you would contact the charge nurse immediately if an abnormal reading is found.

Beginning Procedures (sometimes known as the beginning five)

1. KNOCK, enter and explain.

Knock on the resident's door and request permission to enter. Wait for a response from the resident. Enter the room and introduce yourself. Explain why you are there.

2. IDENTIFY the resident. *** Critical Step

Check that the correct procedure is being started for the correct resident. Facilities will have varied procedures on how to do this. Minimally ask the resident their name and check their wrist band.

3. Provide for PRIVACY.

Close the door, pull the privacy curtain, close drapes / blinds, or move privacy screen.

4. WASH hands.

Follow hand washing procedure completely. Do not skip any steps.

5. SAFETY.

Maintain resident safety at all times: check equipment, use personal protective equipment as needed (gloves, gowns, eyewear, etc.), if necessary lower or raise the bed, lock wheels, use proper body mechanics, etc.

Ending Procedures (sometimes known as the ending five)

1. POSITION the resident.

Be sure the resident is positioned so that they are comfortable and that proper body mechanics are considered. Keep frequently used items and call light within easy reach.

2. OPEN the room.

Ask the resident how they would like the room. Open up the privacy curtain, drapes/blinds, or remove screen if they so desire.

3. WASH Hands.

Follow hand washing procedure completely.

4. REPORT and Record.

Report what you observe, record the procedure according to facility policy.

5. SAFETY. *** Critical Step

Maintain resident safety at all times: lower the bed, lock wheels, and use side rails appropriately. **Place call light within reach.**

Hand washing

1. Gather the equipment needed.
2. Turn on faucet with paper towel and adjust temperature.
3. Holding the fingertips down; wet hands and wrists.
4. Apply soap and work into a lather.
5. **Rub all surfaces of the hand, between fingers, under nails and at least two inches above the wrists together continuously for at least 15 seconds.** (two minutes at the beginning and end of shift, before going on break and before and after meals). ***Critical Step
6. **Without touching the sink of faucet, rinse hands under running water holding fingertips downward. Do not flick fingers.** ***Critical Step
7. **Dry hands and wrists well using paper towels without touching the towel dispenser or sink.**
8. **Using a paper towel, turn the faucet off.** ***Critical Step
9. Discard paper towel in waste container without touching any surface.

9 steps (points) = 6 out of 9 is passing

4 Critical Steps required for passing.

Removal of Gloves

1. **With the fingertips of one hand, pinch the palm of the opposite glove taking care to touch only the glove.** *** Critical Step
2. **Pull the pinched glove off of the hand with the glove ending inside out.** ***Critical Step
3. Hold onto the loose glove with the gloved hand.
4. **Place the fingers of the ungloved hand inside the cuff of the gloved hand between the skin at the wrist and the glove, taking care not to touch the outside surface of the gloved hand.** *** Critical Step
5. Pull the glove toward the finger tips, turning the glove inside out.
6. Remove the gloves and discard into the nearest waste container.
7. Wash and dry hands thoroughly.

7 steps (points) = 5 out of 7 is passing

3 Critical Steps required for passing.

Measuring a Radial Pulse and Respirations

1. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
2. **Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
3. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
4. Wash and dry hands thoroughly utilizing proper technique.
5. Maintain safety.
6. Position the resident's hand and arm so that the resident is comfortable and the arm is supported.
7. Place the middle two or three fingers of the hand on the thumb side of the resident's wrist.
8. Press gently until you feel the pulse. (Note the strength and regularity of the pulse.)
9. **Count the pulse for one full minute by watching the second hand on the watch. (Accurate within 2 BPM above or below). *** Critical Step**
10. Keep your hand in place on resident's wrist.
11. **Count the number of respirations for one full minute. ***Critical Step.** Respirations must match the tester within 2 respirations per minute.
12. Position the resident.
13. Open the room.
14. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using proper technique.
15. Report and record. Report any abnormal reading immediately to your supervisor.
16. **Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach.*** Critical Step**

16 steps (points) = 11 out of 16 is passing

4 Critical Steps required for passing.

Measuring an Apical Pulse

1. Gather needed equipment.
2. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
3. **Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
4. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
5. Wash and dry hands thoroughly utilizing proper technique.
6. Maintain safety.
7. Assist the resident to a position to access the resident's chest, if indicated; provide a quiet environment.
8. Clear the earpiece and the diaphragm.
9. **Uncover the left side of the chest maintaining privacy. ***Critical Step**
10. Place the earpieces of the stethoscope in ears and the diaphragm on the resident's chest under the left nipple.
11. **Count the pulse for one minute watching the second hand on the watch. (Accurate within 2 beats per minute above or below) ***Critical Step**
12. Position the resident.
13. Open the room.
14. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using proper technique.
15. Report and record. Report any abnormal reading immediately to your supervisor.
16. **Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach.*** Critical Step**

16 steps (points) = 11 out of 16 is passing

4 Critical Steps required for passing.

Measuring Blood Pressure

1. Gather the needed supplies.
2. Clean the stethoscope earpieces and diaphragm with antiseptic wipes
3. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
- 4. Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
5. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
6. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using proper technique.
7. Maintain safety. Position the resident comfortably in the bed or chair and rest the resident's arm so that it is supported, preferably level with the heart. Move sleeves to expose the upper arm.
8. Wrap the proper sized cuff around the resident's arm 1 to 1-1/2 inches above the elbow.
9. With your fingertips, palpate the inside of the elbow to locate the brachial artery. Center the cuff above the brachial artery. Place the arrow mark of the cuff above the brachial artery.
10. Close the valve on the sphygmomanometer.
- 11. Place the stethoscope diaphragm over the brachial artery and place the earpieces of the stethoscope into your ears. *** Critical Step**
12. Check the resident's chart or ask what their normal blood pressure reading is. Inflate to 30 mm HG above their normal systolic pressure (or at the point where the brachial or radial pulse disappears). Deflate the cuff and wait 15 seconds before re-inflating to 30 mm HG above where the pulse disappeared.
- 13. Slowly open the valve and allow the cuff to deflate while listening through the stethoscope. Note the measurement of the first sound and the last clear sound heard through the stethoscope. Also note when the sound disappears (this may occur at the same time). Accurate within 4mm HG *** Critical Step**
14. When sounds are no longer heard, open the valve completely and allow the cuff to completely deflate and remove it from the resident's arm.
15. If need to retake the BP, allow one minute before re-inflating the cuff.
16. Position the resident.
17. Open the room.
18. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using proper technique.
19. Report and record. Report any abnormal reading immediately to your supervisor.
20. Safety maintained at all times and call light within reach.

20 steps (points) = 14 out of 20 is passing

3 Critical Steps required for passing.

Measuring an Electronic Oral Temperature

1. Gather the needed supplies
2. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
- 3. Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
4. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
5. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using proper technique.
6. Maintain safety.
7. Turn on the thermometer unit.
8. Apply a disposable probe cover to the oral thermometer probe.
9. Ask the resident to open their mouth and place the probe under the resident's tongue at a slight angle to the left or right.
10. Instruct the resident to close his/her mouth around the probe.
11. Hold the probe in place until the machine signals. Remove the probe from the resident's mouth.
- 12. Correctly read the temperature from the display window of the thermometer unit. *** Critical Step**
13. Discard the probe cover in a waste container without touching it.
14. Turn off the thermometer unit, if applicable
15. Position the resident.
16. Open the room.
17. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using proper technique.
18. Report and record. Report any abnormal reading immediately to your supervisor.
19. Return thermometer unit to charger, if applicable.
- 20. Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach. *** Critical Step**
21. Standard Precautions maintained at all times and no contamination.

21 steps (points) = 14 out of 21 is passing

3 Critical Steps required for passing.

Administering Oral Medications

1. Set up the medications.
2. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
3. **First safety check. *** Critical Step**
4. **Second safety check. *** Critical Step**
5. **Pour the correct dose of oral medication. *** Critical Step**
6. **Third safety check. *** Critical Step**
7. Return the medication container to storage.
8. Secure other medications.
9. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
10. **Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
11. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
12. Apply gloves, if indicated.
13. **Provide the medication according to the 5 rights by the specified route. *** Critical Step**
14. Remove gloves if used and discard into waste container.
15. Dispose of used supplies.
16. Position the resident.
17. Open the room.
18. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
19. **Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach. *** Critical Step**

19 steps (points) = 13 out of 19 is passing

7 Critical Steps required for passing.

Instillation Medication (Eye, Ear, and Nose)

1. Gather the needed supplies. Set up the medication.
- 2. First safety check. *** Critical Step**
- 3. Second safety check. *** Critical Step**
- 4. Third safety check. *** Critical Step.**
5. Return other medications to storage.
6. Secure other medications.
7. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
- 8. Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
9. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
10. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
11. Maintain safety.
12. Position the resident appropriately; if eye drops, position on back or seat upright with head tilted back; if ear drops, position the treated ear facing up; if nose drops, position on back or seat upright.
13. Apply gloves if directed by facility policy.
- 14. Provide medication according to the 5 rights; if eye drops or ointment, wait 5 minutes if more than 2 types are ordered; if ear drops, instruct resident to remain in the position for 5-15 minutes; if nose spray, instruct the resident to “sniff” in quickly with each spray. *** Critical Step.**
15. Use a tissue to remove excess medication if needed.
16. Remove gloves and discard in waste container.
17. Discard used supplies appropriately.
18. Position the resident comfortably.
19. Open the room.
20. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
21. Report and record. Report any abnormal finding immediately to your supervisor.
- 22. Resident safety maintained at all times. *** Critical Step**
23. Standard Precautions maintained at all times and no contamination.
24. Return the medication container to storage and secure, if applicable.

24 steps (points) = 16 out of 24 is passing

6 Critical Steps required for passing.

Administering Oxygen

1. Wash and dry hands thoroughly.
- 2. First safety check. *** Critical Step**
- 3. Second safety check. *** Critical Step**
- 4. Third safety check. *** Critical Step**
5. Gather the needed supplies and equipment.
6. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
- 7. Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
8. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
9. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
10. Attach the flowmeter/flow regulator as indicated.
11. Connect the tubing and delivery device.
- 12. Turn on and adjust the flow of oxygen to the correct dose. *** Critical Step**
13. Position resident.
- 14. Properly apply delivery device to resident. *** Critical Step**
15. Verify the flow rate, humidifier if used, and the cleanliness of the delivery device. Inspect the condition of the skin under the device.
16. Position resident comfortably.
17. Open the room.
18. Report and record.
- 19. Resident safety maintained at all times. *** Critical Step**

19 steps (points) = 13 out of 19 is passing

7 Critical Steps required for passing.

Administering Medication by Nebulizer

1. Wash and dry hands thoroughly.
- 2. Set up medication: First safety check. *** Critical Step.**
- 3. Second safety check. *** Critical Step.**
- 4. Third safety check. *** Critical Step.**
5. Return other medications to storage.
6. Secure other medications.
7. Gather needed supplies.
8. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
- 9. Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
10. Assist resident to an upright position.
11. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
12. Take vital signs if indicated.
13. Apply gloves.
14. Measure and mix medications.
15. Place the medication in the nebulizer chamber.
16. Connect the mouthpiece and compressor and place the mouthpiece in the resident's mouth.
17. Turn on the compressor.
- 18. Provide or assist with treatment according to the 5 rights. ***Critical Step.**
19. Instruct the resident to breathe normally and calmly, and to take a deep breath occasionally.
20. Remove the mouthpiece when all of the medication is inhaled.
21. Turn off the compressor.
22. Repeat vital signs if indicated.
23. Assist the resident with oral care.
24. Remove gloves and discard into the appropriate waste container.
25. Position the resident.
26. Open the room.
27. Wash and dry hands using the appropriate technique.
28. Clean and store equipment.
29. Return equipment to appropriate storage.
- 30. Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach. ***Critical Step**
31. Report and record. Report any abnormal findings immediately to your supervisor.

30 steps (points) = 21 out of 31 is passing

6 Critical Steps required for passing.

Administering a Sublingual or Buccal Medication

1. Wash and dry hands thoroughly.
2. **First safety check. *** Critical Step**
3. **Second safety check. *** Critical Step**
4. **Third safety check. *** Critical Step**
5. Return the medication container to storage.
6. Secure other medications.
7. **Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
8. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
9. Assist the resident to an upright position, if indicated.
10. Apply gloves if indicated.
11. **Provide the medication according to the 5 rights by the specified route. *** Critical Step**
12. Instruct the resident not to eat or drink until the medication has dissolved.
13. Remove gloves if used and discard into waste container.
14. Dispose of used supplies.
15. Position the resident.
16. Open the room.
17. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
18. **Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach.**
*** Critical Step

18 steps (points) = 13 out of 19 is passing

6 Critical Steps required for passing.

Application of Topical Medication

1. Gather the needed supplies. Set up the medication.
2. **First safety check. *** Critical Step**
3. **Second safety check. *** Critical Step**
4. **Measure the topical medication, if applicable; pour the correct dose if a liquid; or retrieve a patch if ordered. ***Critical Step**
5. **Third safety check. *** Critical Step**
6. Return other medications to storage.
7. Secure other medications.
8. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
9. **Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
10. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
11. Prepare a clean workspace.
12. Apply gloves.
13. Observe the skin.
14. **Apply the topical medication according to the 5 rights. *** Critical Step.**
15. Remove gloves and discard into a waste container.
16. Contain the used supplies appropriately.
17. Position the resident.
18. Open the room.
19. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
20. Return the reusable supplies to storage.
21. **Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach. *** Critical Step**
22. Report and record. Report any abnormal finding immediately to your supervisor.

22 steps (points) = 15 out of 22 is passing

7 Critical Steps required for passing.

Administering Medication by Inhaler

1. Gather the needed supplies and set up the medication.
2. **First safety check. *** Critical Step**
3. **Second safety check. *** Critical Step**
4. **Third safety check. ***Critical Step**
5. Secure other medications.
6. Knock on the door and request permission to enter. Introduce yourself to the resident and explain what you plan to do.
7. **Identify the resident. *** Critical Step**
8. Provide privacy with curtain, screen or door.
9. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
10. Maintain safety.
11. Assist the resident to an upright position.
12. Assemble the inhaler and shake well.
13. Instruct the resident to tilt his/her head back slightly & breathe out.
14. **Provide the medication according to the 5 rights by pressing the inhaler as the resident breathes in. *** Critical Step**
15. Instruct the resident to hold his/her breath for 10 seconds.
16. Repeat puff at the appropriate time if ordered.
17. Assist the resident with oral care.
18. Discard used supplies properly.
19. Position the resident.
20. Open the room.
21. Wash and dry hands thoroughly using the proper technique.
22. Report and record. Report any abnormal finding immediately to your supervisor.
23. **Resident safety maintained at all times and call light within reach. *** Critical Step**
24. Standard Precautions maintained at all times and no contamination.
25. Clean and store the inhaler.

25 steps (points) = 17 out of 25 is passing

6 Critical Steps required for passing.