



Provincial Health Services Authority

# MULTIDOSE MEDICATIONS IN PATIENT CARE AREAS PROCEDURE

## Summary of Changes

	NEW	Previous
BC Cancer	New Procedure that covers all BC Cancer Patient Care areas, and will incorporate all multidose medication dosage forms.	Replaces Multidose Vials in Patient Care Areas (Provincial Pharmacy Directive III-40-09)

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# MULTIDOSE MEDICATIONS IN PATIENT CARE AREAS PROCEDURE

## 1. Introduction

[Multidose medications](#) are manufactured, designed, and labelled with the intention of administering multiple doses. They are available in various dosage forms, including injectables, inhalers, and topicals.

Re-use of multidose medications across multiple patients in patient care areas may lead to contamination which can be transmitted between patients. Limiting the use of multidose medications to a single patient, or using single-dose alternatives, is best practice and reduces the risk of cross-contamination and spread of infection.

However, there may be circumstances where there is no alternative single-use option, or the use of a multidose preparation for a single patient is not practical.

### 1.1. Focus

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the required measures for handling and storage of [multidose medications](#) when used for multiple patients.

### 1.2. Practice Level

The standards set forth in this procedure apply to all patient care areas at BC Cancer that administer medications, including inpatient, ambulatory/outpatient, radiation therapy, diagnostic/imaging, and surgical areas.

### 1.3. Definitions

**Multidose Medications:** Any medication in any dosage form that is manufactured and intended to be used for administration of multiple doses.

### 1.4. Need to Know

Where possible, [multidose medications](#) should be replaced with single-use unit-dosed packaged medications to avoid the risk of contamination. However, in cases where this is not possible, multidose medications may be used for a single patient only.

## 2. Procedure

### 2.1. Use of Multidose Medications

Where [multidose medications](#) must be used on multiple patients due to feasibility or cost:

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- I. Requests must be sent to and reviewed by the Provincial Pharmacy Professional Practice Council (P4C).
- II. Any additional procedures for cleaning, disinfection, and storage to be reviewed by infection control and noted in the following table.

As such, the following medication(s) are approved exceptions:

Medication	Approved Location(s) for Use	Additional Procedures for Cleaning, Disinfection, and Storage

### 2.2. Handling of Multidose Medications

- 1) When using multidose vials for injection, use aseptic technique and other [multidose medications](#) (topicals, inhalers, etc), handle with clean hands.
- 2) Multidose medications should be accessed on a surface that is clean and where no dirty, used, or potentially contaminated equipment is placed or stored.
- 3) Each time a multidose vial for injection is accessed, wipe the diaphragm with 70% isopropyl alcohol before inserting a needle or device into the vial. Once the medication is drawn up, immediately withdraw the needle from the vial. A needle should never be left in a vial to be attached to a new syringe.
- 4) Discard multidose medications if contamination is suspected.

### 2.3. Labelling and Storage of Multidose Medications

#### Labelling:

- 1) Once opened, label [multidose medication](#) with the date of opening and expiry if applicable.
  - a. If date of opening is not indicated or not legible, medication should be discarded.
- 2) Label multidose medications used for a single patient with a patient-specific label.

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## Storage:

- 1) For [multidose medications](#) used for a single patient:
  - a. Store in a patient-specific labelled medication bin, either located within Omnicell, a medication cart, or Omnicell fridge, depending on required storage temperature.
- 2) For multidose medications approved for use in multiple patients:
  - a. Store in a location approved by P4C
  - b. Clean/disinfect between uses with a hospital grade disinfectant wipe.

**Note:** Multidose medications will expire as per the manufacturer's expiry date, or earlier if the manufacturer provides specific instructions for earlier expiry upon opening of a multidose container (i.e. insulin).

## 3. References

- 1) <https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/routine-practices-precautions-healthcare-associated-infections/routine-practices-precautions-healthcare-associated-infections-2016-FINAL-eng.pdf>
- 2) Accreditation Canada Medication Management Standards: <https://accreditation.ca/standards/>
- 3) <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/health-topics/infection-prevention-control/clinical-office-practice/multidose-vials>

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