

High Alert Medications

myhomecare.ie
®Servisource



What are High Alert Medications

- High-alert medications are those medications that bear a heightened risk of causing significant patient harm when they are used in error
- Although any medication used improperly can cause harm, high-alert medications cause harm more commonly and the harm they produce is likely to be more serious and leads to service user suffering and additional costs associated with care of these service users.

HIGH RISK MEDICINES



What do I need to know about High Alert Medications

- It is important for you to know what medications you are taking and what are considered High Risk Medications
- Know the medication and keep a list
- Check you are using the right medicine the right way
- Talk to your GP and pharmacy about this and our CNM will be able to provide you with some additional education on these medicines

myhomecare.ie
® Servisource



Some of ISMP'S List of High Alert Medications groups:

- Adrenergic Agents
 - Anticonvulsants
- Immunosuppressants
 - Anticoagulants
- Chemotherapeutic Agents, Oral
 - Insulin
 - Narcotics
 - Sedatives
 - Opioids

More can be found:

<https://www.ismp.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2018-08/highAlert2018-Acute-Final.pdf>



Some High Alert Medication Names common in community settings

- Xarelto
- Pradaxa
- Oral Methadone
 - Eliquis
- Humulin R U-500
 - Novolog
 - Levemir
 - Lantus
 - Apidra
- Oxycodone
- Fentanyl
- Warfarin
- Methotrexate
- Enoxaparin



Guidance and Safe Storage of High Alert Medications

- Store high alert medications in a dry safe place preferably a locked cupboard or press.
- Keep medication out of direct sunlight
- Refrigerate liquid medications as per pharmacy's instructions
- Ideally keep high alert medications separate to regular medications where possible

- Always check your medication before taking it, double check if you are unsure. Follow the pharmacist's instructions when taking your medication
- Put medication away safely again after each use.

- Keep out of reach and sight for children



Medications List in your Care Folder

- Based off your medication list provided we will use the red amber and green categories to highlight medications that pose additional risks when used incorrectly
- The names of the medications will be colour coded in paper format in your care folder and we encourage you to access this colour coded list so you understand which category each medication falls under.
- Your pharmacy will advise you what to take extra care with when you receive your medication



myhomecare.ie
® Servisource



The Red Amber Green classification offers guidance on what medications you need to be careful whilst taking. Please see some simple definitions:

RED- A high alert medication is a medication that carries a heightened risk of causing significant harm if it is used in error. So, this could happen if you take too much or too little of this category of medication

AMBER- Also considered high risk which can also cause significant harm if taken in error.

GREEN- Has a lower risk than the RED OR AMBER category and carries a significantly lower risk if used in error.

***Any medication belonging to the Green category although the risk is significantly lower caution should still be taken and safety around taking medications outlined as green**



Helpful links for more High Alert Medication Information

- https://www.pharmacy.gov.my/v2/sites/default/files/document-upload/guideline-safe-use-high-alert-medications-hams-2nd-edition_2.pdf
- <https://imsn.ie/publications-alerts/>
- <https://www.ismp.org/sites/default/files/attachments/2017-11/highAlert-community.pdf>
- <https://www.nmbi.ie/NMBI/media/NMBI/NMBI-Medication-Administration-2020.pdf?ext=.pdf>
- <https://www.hse.ie/eng/about/who/nqpsd/qps-improvement/national-medication-safety-programme-safermeds-.html>

myhomecare.ie
® Servisource

