

Medical Terminology

Flashcard Study Guide

Chapter 52: Administering Medication

31 terms

Each card contains:


Term | Syllables | *Pronunciation* | Definition |  *Memory trick*

Chapter 52 — Administering Medication

Ampoules

am · poules *AM-poolz*


Small sealed glass containers holding a single dose of liquid medication. The glass neck is broken to access the medication, which is drawn up with a syringe and filter needle.

 *Ampoule = a glass 'amp' you snap open. Break the neck to get the single-dose liquid out. Always use a filter needle.*

Artificially acquired active immunity

ar · ti · fi · cial · ly ac · quired ac · tive im · mu · ni · ty *ar-tih-FISH-ul-ee uh-KWIRED AK-tiv ih-MYOO-nih-tee*

Protection from disease that develops after receiving a vaccine. The body creates its own antibodies in response to vaccine antigens, providing long-term immunity.

 *Vaccine = artificial trigger → body builds its OWN protection (active). You make the antibodies yourself after a shot.*

Deltoid muscle

del · toid mus · cle *DEL-toyd MUS-ul*


The triangular muscle of the upper arm/shoulder, used as an injection site for intramuscular injections (vaccines). Limited volume capacity: maximum 1 mL.

 *Deltoid = delta-shaped (triangle). The shoulder muscle shaped like the Greek letter delta (Δ). Common vaccine site — small volume only.*

Diphtheria

diph · the · ri · a *dif-THEER-ee-uh*

A serious bacterial infection caused by *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* that affects the throat and can form a gray membrane blocking the airway. Prevented by the DTaP vaccine.

 *Diphtheria starts with a 'diph't' — think of 'diffthroat.' It attacks the throat with a dangerous membrane. Prevented by DTaP.*

Dorsogluteal site

dor · so · glu · te · al site *dor-so-GLOO-tee-ul syt*

An IM injection site in the upper outer quadrant of the buttock. Due to proximity to the sciatic nerve and large blood vessels, this site is now less preferred.

💡 *'Dorso' = back + 'gluteal' = buttock. The back of the butt. Now avoided because of sciatic nerve risk — use ventrogluteal instead.*

Hepatitis A

hep · a · ti · tis A *hep-uh-TYE-tis ay*

A viral liver infection spread primarily through contaminated food and water (fecal-oral route). Usually self-limiting; preventable by the hepatitis A vaccine.

💡 *Hep A = food/water-borne. Think 'A = Appetizers' — spread through contaminated food. Vaccine available.*

Hepatitis B

hep · a · ti · tis B *hep-uh-TYE-tis bee*

A serious viral liver infection spread through blood, sexual contact, and from mother to child at birth. Can become chronic and lead to liver disease. Preventable by vaccine.

💡 *Hep B = Blood-borne. Think 'B = Blood.' Healthcare workers must be vaccinated. Spread by blood, sex, birth.*

Hib disease

Hib dis · ease *hib dih-ZEEZ*

Serious infections caused by Haemophilus influenzae type b bacteria, including meningitis, epiglottitis, and pneumonia. Most dangerous in children under 5. Prevented by Hib vaccine.

💡 *Hib = 'Haemophilus influenzae type b.' It's NOT the flu — it's a bacteria that can cause meningitis. Hib vaccine prevents it.*

Immunity

im · mu · ni · ty *ih-MYOO-nih-tee*

The body's ability to resist or defend against specific pathogens or toxins. Can be natural (innate) or acquired (adaptive), and active or passive.

💡 *Immunity = being immune (protected). Like diplomatic immunity — protected from attack. The body is protected from pathogens.*

Immunization

im · mu · ni · za · tion *ih-myoo-nih-ZAY-shun*

The process of making a person immune to a disease, typically through vaccination. Immunization programs have virtually eliminated many once-common deadly diseases.

💡 *Immunization = making someone immune. The process of building immunity through vaccines. Immunize = protect through vaccination.*

Immunoglobulin

im · mu · no · glob · u · lin *ih-myoo-noh-GLOB-yoo-lin*

Antibody proteins produced by the immune system to fight specific pathogens. Given as a medication (passive immunity) to provide immediate but temporary protection.

💡 *'Immuno' = immune + 'globulin' = protein. Immunoglobulin = immune proteins (antibodies). Given to provide instant, borrowed immunity.*

Inactive polio vaccine (IPV)

in · ac · tive po · li · o vac · cine *in-AK-tiv POH-lee-oh vak-SEEN*

The injectable form of the polio vaccine containing inactivated (killed) poliovirus. Currently the only form used in the United States; replaces the oral live vaccine.

💡 *IPV = Injected Polio Vaccine. 'Inactive' = killed virus. Can't cause disease. The shot version of polio vaccine used in the US.*

Inhalation medications

in · ha · la · tion med · i · ca · tions *in-huh-LAY-shun med-ih-KAY-shunz*

Drugs delivered directly into the respiratory tract through inhalers, nebulizers, or sprays. Provide rapid, targeted effect with fewer systemic side effects than oral medications.

💡 *Inhalation = breathing in. Drug goes straight to the lungs. Inhalers deliver medication directly where it's needed — fast and targeted.*

Intradermal (ID) injection

in · tra · der · mal in · jec · tion *in-truh-DER-mul in-JEK-shun*

An injection into the dermis (upper skin layer), producing a small bleb or wheal. Used for allergy skin testing and tuberculin (TB) testing. Small volumes: 0.01–0.1 mL.

💡 *'Intra' = within + 'dermal' = skin. Injected INTO the skin (not under it). Used for the TB test — creates a small bubble.*

Intramuscular (IM) injection

in · tra · mus · cu · lar in · jec · tion *in-truh-MUS-kyoo-ler in-JEK-shun*

An injection delivered directly into muscle tissue, allowing for faster absorption than subcutaneous injection. Larger volumes (up to 3 mL) can be administered.

💡 *'Intra' = within + 'muscular' = muscle. IM goes INTO the muscle. Faster than sub-Q, allows larger volumes. 90° angle.*

Liquid medication

liq · uid med · i · ca · tion *LIK-wid med-ih-KAY-shun*

Medications in solution or suspension form, including elixirs, syrups, suspensions, and solutions. Commonly used for patients who cannot swallow pills.

💡 *Liquid medications = drugs in drinkable form. Easy for children and those who can't swallow pills. Measure carefully!*

Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine

Mea · sles, mumps, and ru · bel · la vac · cine *MEE-zulz mumpz and roo-BEL-uh vak-SEEN*

A combined live-attenuated vaccine protecting against three viral diseases: measles, mumps, and rubella. Given in two doses during childhood; also protects adults.

💡 *MMR = three M's: Measles, Mumps, Rubella. Two shots during childhood. Live vaccine — cannot give to pregnant women.*

Oral medication

o · ral med · i · ca · tion *OR-ul med-ih-KAY-shun*

Medication taken by mouth in the form of tablets, capsules, liquids, or sublingual preparations. The most common and convenient route; must pass through the GI tract.

💡 Oral = mouth. Oral medications go in the mouth, through the gut, and into the bloodstream. Slowest but most convenient route.

Oral polio vaccine (OPV)

o · ral po · li · o vac · cine *OR-ul POH-lee-oh vak-SEEN*

A live-attenuated oral polio vaccine administered by mouth as drops. No longer used in the US (replaced by IPV) but still used in some developing countries.

💡 OPV = swallowed, not injected. 'O' = Oral, taken by mouth. Live virus — was effective but could rarely cause polio. Replaced by IPV in the US.

Parenteral medication administration

par · en · ter · al med · i · ca · tion ad · min · is · tra · tion *par-EN-ter-ul med-ih-KAY-shun ad-min-ih-STRAY-shun*

Administration of drugs by any route other than the digestive tract — including injections (IV, IM, SQ, ID), inhalation, and topical. From the Greek 'para' (beside) + 'enteron' (intestine).

💡 'Par' = beside + 'enteral' = intestine. Parenteral = bypassing the intestines. Any route that avoids the GI tract.

Pertussis

per · tus · sis *per-TUS-is*

Whooping cough — a highly contagious bacterial respiratory infection causing severe coughing fits. The DTaP vaccine protects against it. Particularly dangerous in infants.

💡 Pertussis = persistent cough. The 'whoop' sound comes after each coughing fit. P = Pertussis = Persistent 'whooping' cough.

Pneumococcal vaccine

pneu · mo · coc · cal vac · cine *noo-moh-KOK-ul vak-SEEN*

A vaccine protecting against Streptococcus pneumoniae bacteria, which cause pneumonia, meningitis, and bloodstream infections. Recommended for older adults and young children.

💡 Pneumococcal = pneumonia-causing bacteria. The vaccine prevents the most common cause of bacterial pneumonia. 'Pneumo' = lung.

Prefilled cartridge injection systems

pre · filled car · tridge in · jec · tion sys · tems *pree-FILD KAR-trij in-JEK-shun SIS-temz*

Single-dose cartridges containing premeasured medication, inserted into a reusable pen-type injector. Common for insulin, heparin, and hormones.

💡 Like a camera film cartridge — pre-loaded with one dose. Pop it in the injector pen and you're ready to give the shot.

Subcutaneous injection

sub · cu · ta · ne · ous in · jec · tion *sub-kyoo-TAY-nee-us in-JEK-shun*

An injection into the subcutaneous tissue (fatty layer beneath the skin). Used for insulin, heparin, and some vaccines. Small volumes: 0.5–1.5 mL. 45° angle.

💡 *'Sub' = under + 'cutaneous' = skin. Sub-Q = under the skin (into the fat). Insulin goes here. 45-degree angle, pinch the skin.*

Tetanus

tet · a · nus *TET-uh-nus*

A serious bacterial infection caused by Clostridium tetani toxin, causing painful muscle stiffness and spasms ('lockjaw'). Prevented by the DTaP and Td vaccines.

💡 *Tetanus = 'tight' muscles. 'Lockjaw' is the classic sign — jaws clamp shut. Prevented by the Td booster every 10 years.*

Vaccines

vac · cines *vak-SEENZ*

Biological preparations containing antigens (killed or weakened pathogens, proteins, or genetic material) that stimulate immunity against specific diseases.

💡 *Vaccine = from 'vacca' (Latin for cow) — the first vaccine used cowpox to prevent smallpox (Jenner, 1796). Now covers dozens of diseases.*

Varicella

var · i · cel · la *vair-ih-SEL-uh*

Chickenpox — a highly contagious viral disease caused by the varicella-zoster virus, causing an itchy blister rash. Prevented by the varicella vaccine.

💡 *Varicella = chickenpox. Remember: 'Var-icella' = 'Various-cells' of blisters all over. The vaccine prevents chickenpox and reduces shingles risk.*

Vastus lateralis muscle

vas · tus lat · er · a · lis mus · cle *VAS-tus lat-er-AY-lis MUS-ul*

A large muscle on the outer thigh (anterolateral aspect), used as an IM injection site particularly for infants and toddlers. Can accommodate larger volumes.

💡 *Vastus = vast/large. Lateralis = lateral/side. The VAST LATERAL thigh muscle. The preferred IM site for infants — large and away from nerves.*

Ventrogluteal site

ven · tro · glu · te · al site *ven-troh-GLOO-tee-ul syt*

The preferred IM injection site for adults, located in the gluteus medius muscle on the lateral hip. Fewer major blood vessels and nerves compared to dorsogluteal site.

💡 *'Ventre' = front/belly side + 'gluteal' = buttock. The FRONT-side hip muscle. Safer than dorsogluteal — preferred adult IM site.*

Viscosity

vis · cos · i · ty *vis-KOS-ih-tee*

The thickness or resistance to flow of a liquid medication. Highly viscous medications (like oil-based injections) require larger-gauge needles and inject more slowly.

💡 Viscosity = thickness. High viscosity = thick (like honey). Low viscosity = thin (like water). Thicker medications need bigger needles.

Z-track method

Z-track meth · od *zee-trak METH-ud*

An IM injection technique where the skin is pulled to the side before injection and released afterward, creating a Z-shaped track that seals the medication in muscle and prevents leakage.

💡 Z-track = pull the skin sideways to make a Z-shaped path. The drug gets trapped in the muscle when skin snaps back. Used for irritating medications like iron.