PURPOSE:
To provide safe and accurate medication administration.
To instruct patient/caregiver about oral medication administration and medication regime.

EQUIPMENT:
Written patient medication guides (to be left in the home)
Appropriate teaching aids
Appropriate medication containers, i.e., original container, daily or weekly container, etc.

PROCEDURE:
1. Obtain a physician’s order for the patient’s medications. It should include:
   a. Name of the patient.
   b. Name of the medicine.
   c. Medication dose, route and frequency.
2. Use at least 2 patient identifiers prior to administering medications.
3. Check the patient’s known allergies.
4. During each nursing visit assess what oral medications the patient is taking and what oral medications are ordered. Be sure to include over-the-counter medications the patient may be using. Inform the physician of any over-the-counter medications that are not written on the patient’s medication record and that may have been prescribed by another physician.
5. Instruct the patient/caregiver on the schedule of the medication, the dosage, purpose and side effects.
6. During each nursing visit assess oral medication compliance (via pill counts, review of patient calendars, interviewing the patient/family member, etc.), side effects, effectiveness and the patient's/caregiver's knowledge of the medication, purpose and side effects.
7. Provide patient/caregiver with instructional medication handouts, teaching guides and educational material to keep. Topics should include:
   a. Medication's name.
   b. What it is for.
   c. What it looks like.
   d. Directions for taking the medication.
      (1) How much to take.
      (2) With meals or on empty stomach.
      (3) The same time each day.
      (4) The number of hours between doses.
   e. Special precautions or side effects.
   f. The side effects to report to the physician or nurse.
   g. Storage of medication in original containers.
      Note if medications must be stored away from light, moisture, etc.
8. Teach and assist the patient/caregiver to establish compliance with oral medication administration on each visit in the following manner:
   a. Fit the medication into the patient's daily routine.
   b. Use calendars or checklists with the medication times marked. Use large print, if needed.
   c. Schedule the medications around usual routines like meals, using cues or clues.
   d. Utilize medication containers as applicable, i.e., daily container, morning cup, afternoon cup, labeled egg carton, pillbox, etc.
   e. Use color code charts to coincide with a color dot on medication bottles.
   f. Request liquid form if tablets cannot be swallowed or crushed.
9. Report to the physician therapeutic effects of the medications, any adverse side effects and/or difficulty with patient/caregiver's medication compliance.
10. Encourage the patient to use the same pharmacist for all medications.
11. Consult with home health agency Medical Director for guidelines for drugs not approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

AFTER CARE:
1. Document in patient's record:
   a. Medication administered, dose, time and route.
   b. Teaching and instructions given to patient/caregiver.
   c. Patient’s response to teaching.
   d. Communication with the physician.