CHAPTER 1
COMMUNITY PHARMACY

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COMMUNITY PHARMACY OPERATIONS

• Technician Duties Related to Dispensing Over-the-Counter Drugs and Diet Supplements: In the community pharmacy, a pharmacy technician assumes a number of responsibilities related to both OTC and legend drugs, which depend on state laws and regulations.
COMMUNITY PHARMACY OPERATIONS

- Technician Duties Related to Dispensing Prescription Drugs: A technician can take written prescriptions from walk-in customers but cannot take new prescriptions by telephone and reduce them to writing.
Community Pharmacy Dispensing Issues

Safety Note!

- Pharmacy technicians should not counsel patients about OTC products without the approval of the pharmacist.
GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING AND REVIEWING PRESCRIPTIONS

• **Checking for Patient Allergies:** The parts of a prescription include prescriber information, the date, patient information, the symbol Rx, the inscription, the subscription, the signa, additional instructions, and the signature.
GUIDELINES FOR RECEIVING AND REVIEWING PRESCRIPTIONS

• **Receiving a Controlled-Drug Prescription:** Prescriptions for controlled substances require special record-keeping procedures. Pharmacy technicians should be sure to follow any labeling requirements as determined under state and federal law.
Critical Path of a Prescription

1. The patient drops off the prescription.
Critical Path of a Prescription

2. The pharmacy technician checks the prescription to make certain it is complete and authentic; then he or she verifies that the patient is in the pharmacy database. If the patient is not in the pharmacy database, the technician obtains necessary demographic, insurance, and allergy information from the patient and enters the information into the computer.

Table 6.1
3. The pharmacy technician enters the prescription into the computer, bills the insurance company or the patient, and generates the medication label.
4. The pharmacy technician asks the pharmacist to check the drug use review (DUR) or drug interaction warning screen when required.

Table 6.1
Critical Path of a Prescription

5. The pharmacy technician selects the appropriate medication and verifies the National Drug Code (NDC) number on the computer-generated medication label.
Critical Path of a Prescription

6. The pharmacy technician prepares the medication(s) (e.g., the prescribed number of tablets is counted or the liquid measured).
Critical Path of a Prescription

7. The pharmacy technician packages the medication in the appropriate container.

Table 6.1
8. The pharmacy technician labels the prescription container with the computer-generated medication label. In some states the law requires the pharmacist to affix the label to the container.
9. The pharmacy technician prepares the filled prescription for the pharmacist to check.
10. The pharmacist checks the prescription(s) and may initial it.

Table 6.1
Critical Path of a Prescription

11. The pharmacy technician bags the approved prescription for patient sale and attaches an information sheet about the prescription, including indications, interactions, and possible side effects.

Table 6.1
Critical Path of a Prescription

12. The pharmacy technician returns the bulk product container to the shelf.

Table 6.1
Critical Path of a Prescription

13. The pharmacy technician delivers the packaged prescription to the cash register area for patient pickup and pharmacist counseling.
Figure 6.1
Community Pharmacy
Dispensing Issues

Safety Note!

• Show all questionably authentic prescriptions to the pharmacist.
Terms to Remember

• **signa**
• **allergy**
• **adverse drug reaction**

Learn more at [American Institute of the History of Pharmacy (AIHP)](http://www.aihp.org)
Discussion

• Discuss how you would handle a prescription for a controlled substance that you suspect is forged.
PATIENT PROFILE

- **Creating New Profiles:** The pharmacy technician is often responsible for entering the new prescription order and creating or updating the computerized patient profile.
Terms to Remember

• patient profile

Learn more at American Institute of the History of Pharmacy (AIHP)
MEDICATION SELECTION AND PREPARATION

• Preparing Oral Dose Forms: Oral drug products are available in many different dose forms, and each dose form has its own dispensing requirements.
Figure 6.4
MEDICATION SELECTION AND PREPARATION

• **Dispensing Prepackaged Drugs:** Filling a prescription often involves simply retrieving from stock a drug with the right name, manufacturer, and strength.
• **Dispensing Schedule V Over-the-Counter Drugs:**
  Some Schedule V controlled substances may be dispensed without a prescription under specific conditions.
MEDICATION SELECTION
AND PREPARATION

• **Dispensing Drugs That Contain Ephedra:** Many states have passed legislation restricting the access and sale of products containing ephedra and pseudoephedrine.
• Choosing Containers: A wide variety of amber vial sizes are available and selecting the proper vial size is a skill that will be learned quickly.
Terms to Remember

• *unit of use*

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Discussion

- It can be frustrating for a customer to have difficulty identifying the pharmacist and to not understand the different roles of the pharmacist and the pharmacy technician. What types of things could you do as a pharmacy technician to help the customers?
LABEL PREPARATION

• Contents of a label: Medication container labels must contain many different elements, including a unique prescription number, the name of the patient, directions for use, and the name and strength of the medication.
Figure 6.6
Terms to Remember

• package insert

Learn more at American Institute of the History of Pharmacy (AIHP)
FINAL CHECK OF THE PRESCRIPTION

• **Final Checking:** The pharmacist is responsible for the final check of the original prescription, the patient profile, the drug and drug quantity used, and the accuracy of the medication label.
Community Pharmacy Dispensing Issues

Safety Note!

- The technician should become aware and thoroughly familiar with the appropriate state’s regulations concerning scheduled drugs.