



Pharmacist Administration of Hazardous Medications

The College has received inquiries about a pharmacist's ability to administer hazardous and/or cytotoxic medications such as testosterone or methotrexate. Hazardous drugs are medications that pose a potential health risk from exposure in the workplace. Information and a list of hazardous drugs in healthcare settings can be found here: [National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health {NIOSH} List of Antineoplastic and Other Hazardous Drugs in Healthcare Settings, 2016](#). A pharmacist must check the list as well as the product's safety data sheet and monograph prior to administering a product. The pharmacist must determine whether additional precautions need to be taken and ensure those requirements are met.

The current legislation and practice directions would not prevent a pharmacist from administering these drugs if this is indicated in the product monograph and/or approved by the product manufacturer. However, the pharmacist must have the required knowledge, skill, and competence, and follow the appropriate procedures and precautions for the safe preparation and administration in order to protect and prevent contamination to the pharmacist, patient or other staff. Safe drug administration policies and procedures must be in place, including precautionary measures for safe transport, disposal of the hazardous product, management of an accidental spillage, and measures for handling any adverse reactions that may arise after administration.

The authorization to administer drugs by injection does not automatically mean that a pharmacist is trained and competent to inject all types of drug products. Hazardous drugs pose different considerations and safety precautions. A risk assessment must be performed and training undertaken as needed.

CPhM does not currently have a guideline regarding injections of hazardous drugs by pharmacists, but the Alberta College of Pharmacists {ACP} has published [Guidelines for Medication and Vaccine Injection Safety](#). This guidance should be followed by Manitoba pharmacists administering hazardous medications. It states:

If hazardous drugs are administered in the practice setting they are stored¹ handled and used safely.

- a. *A written procedure is in place for the management of hazardous drugs.*
- b. *Hazardous drugs are stored separately from other medications if possible.*
- c. *Employees and others at risk from handling hazardous drugs are identified and provided with adequate training and equipment.*
- d. *Cytotoxic spill kits are available and staff are trained in spill management.*
- e. *Adequate personal protective equipment including but not limited to gloves, disposable gowns and facial protection is worn for administration of hazardous drugs*
- f. *Additional personal protective equipment is used where there is potential for splash, spill or aerosolization.*

- II. Personal protective equipment is disposable where possible.*
- f. Hazardous drug waste and equipment is disposed at point of use into a cytotoxic waste container with minimal manipulation (e.g. needles and syringes are left intact).*

In summary, it is not outside of a pharmacist scope of practice to administer hazardous medications, however the necessary policies and procedures, equipment and additional knowledge, skill, and training need to be in place.