

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS TO COMPOUNDING

Q: WHAT IS COMPOUNDING?

A. Compounding is customizing medications to satisfy a patient's specific need. This practice of preparing these medications dates back to the origins of pharmacy; however, compounding's presence in the pharmacy profession has changed over the years. The demand for professional compounding has increased as healthcare professionals and patients realize that the limited number of strengths and dosage forms that are commercially available do not meet the needs of many patients, and that these patients often have a better response to a customized dosage form that is "just what the doctor ordered".

Q: HOW DOES COMPOUNDING BENEFIT ME?

A. Every individual is unique & deserves customized medication to fit their specific needs. Many patients are allergic to dyes or preservatives, or sensitive to standard drug strengths. With a physician's consent a compounding pharmacist can change the strength of a prescription. In addition, the pharmacist can alter the form by making it easier for a patient to digest or by adding flavor for a more pleasant taste. There are also a variety of unique delivery systems, such as transdermal gel, sublingual troche or lozenge, a lollipop, or a powder insufflators. For those patients that have difficulty swallowing a capsule, a pharmacist can make a suspension, or a suppository.

CONVENIENT TO USE

Taking multiple prescriptions can be confusing and can result in dosage errors or noncompliance. We can compound several medications into a preparation that contains the needed concentrations of each drug, which is much more economical and convenient for the patient.

ALTERNATE ROUTE OF ADMINISTRATION

For example, if a patient has difficulty swallowing or problems with absorption, Choice Family Pharmacy can prepare customized medicated dosage forms. This can prevent the need for intravenous therapy and possibly avoid a hospital stay.

Q: CAN MY CHILD (OR ELDERLY PARENT) TAKE COMPOUNDED MEDICATION?

A. Yes. Children and the elderly are the ones that usually benefit the most from compounding. Often, parents have difficult time getting a child to take medicine because of the taste. A pharmacist can add a flavoring agent such as cherry, bubble gum, or chocolate to satisfy a patient's taste preference without changing the properties of the medication.

Compounding medications are often used for pain management in hospice care. Some patients with a target pain area cannot take certain medications due to gastrointestinal side effects. Working with a physician, a compounding pharmacist can provide them with a topical preparation with the anti-inflammatory or analgesic their doctor has prescribed for them.

Q: WHAT KIND OF PRESCRIPTIONS CAN BE COMPOUNDED?

A. Almost any medication. Compounded medications are ideal for anyone who needs unique dosage and/or delivery system such as oral rinses, lollipops, sprays, suppositories, & lip balm. Compounding can also be used to treat Hospice, Hormone Replacement Therapy, Pediatric, Dental, Veterinary, Dermatology, Pain Management, Sports Medicine, Infertility, Podiatry & so much more.

Q: WILL MY INSURANCE COVER COMPOUNDED MEDICATIONS?

A. Since, compounded medications are free from having the National Drug Code ID numbers, which manufactured products have, some insurance companies will not directly reimburse the compounding pharmacy. You may have to pay the pharmacy directly for a compounded medication, most insurance plans should cover the final cost. However, almost all insurance plans allow for the patient to be reimbursed by sending in claim forms.

Q: IS COMPOUNDING EXPENSIVE?

A. Compounding may or may not cost more than a standard prescription. The cost depends on the type of dosage form, equipment needed, & the time spent researching & preparing the medication. Fortunately, compounding pharmacist have access to pure-grade quality chemicals which significantly lowers overall costs, allowing them to offer competitive prices compared with commercially manufactured products.

Q: IS COMPOUNDING LEGAL AND SAFE?

A. Compounding has been apart of healthcare since the origins of pharmacy, & today is widely used through out areas of the healthcare industry. Over the last decade, compounding has benefited greatly from advances in technology, quality control, & research methodology. The Food & Drug administration has stated that compounded medications are both ethical & legal as long as they are prescribed by a licensed practitioner for a specific patient and compounded by a licensed pharmacy. Furthermore, compounding is regulated by state boards of pharmacy.

Q: DOES MY DOCTOR KNOW ABOUT COMPOUNDING?

A. Compounding is a fast growing part of various physician's practices. Although in today's world of aggressive marketing by drug manufactures, some may not realize the degree of compounding's resurgence in recent years. Consult your physician and compounding pharmacist about taking customized medication to fit your specific needs.

APPROPRIATE DOSAGE FORM:

- Powder
- Medicated Lollipops
- Medicated Lozenges
- Topical Spray
- Oral Spray
- Lip Balms
- Capsules
- Suspensions
- Otic Insufflations
- Suppositories
- Oral Troches
- Liquids
- Treats
- Gels
- Topical Cream
- Ointments
- Urethral Inserts

BEST STRENGTH

- The medication dosage that is commercially available may not be specifically what the patient needs.
- Having exactly the right amount a patient needs could eliminate unwanted side effects or the patient having to split or crush tablets or take multiple capsules.

SUGAR, PRESERVATIVE, DYE, OR LACTOSE-FREE

Elixirs, syrups, and suspensions may contain preservatives such as alcohol which may be problematic, or sugar which makes the medication undesirable for diabetics or for prolonged use in the mouth. We can compound sugar-free and preservative-free dosage forms. If a patient is allergic to a dye, lactose, or other inactive ingredient, we can compound the medication without the problem causing additives.

FLAVORED TO PLEASE

We flavor medications to make them more patient-friendly and improve compliance. Do you know a child who doesn't like the flavor of his antibiotic? We can flavor medication to taste like a real banana, watermelon, or root beer. Perhaps an older woman who says her medication is too sweet? Coffee flavor may be the answer. A finicky feline? We have special flavors animals will devour— fish flavors for cats, tutti frutti for exotics, beef for dogs, & more!