

MEDICATION CRUSHING POLICY

Many medications should not be crushed or chewed. As a general rule, these include:

- ∞ Sublingual or buccal tablets as it causes the drug to be ineffective. Eg Buccastem
- ∞ Enteric-coated tablets as the drug may
 - be released too early and be destroyed by stomach acid eg Somac
 - irritate the mucosal lining. Eg Doxycycline, NSAIDS, Slow K
- ∞ Extended-release preparations as this may result in
 - an increased risk of side effects and/or,
 - insufficient duration of action eg Ferrogradumet, Felo, Betaloc, DHC, Pytazen
- ∞ Medications with a foul taste. Eg Quinine
- ∞ Carcinogenic or teratogenic medications may cause a hazard to health care workers because of aerosolization of particles. Eg methotrexate

Capsules, unless carcinogenic/teratogenic, can often be split and their contents mixed with food, but the contents cannot generally be crushed or chewed, eg Losec granules are enteric coated to protect against stomach acid.

These policies are very general and there may be *individual* circumstances that will result in a medication/s, contained on the above list, being crushed. For example, some extended release tablets are scored and may be safely divided in half, but cannot be crushed, eg Betaloc.

Patients should be observed for chewing medications contained in the above list and advice sought if necessary.

Your Pharmacist is the best source of advice on the above policy and can make recommendations if it is believed that a medication regime needs to be modified.