



## OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATIONS AND NON-PRESCRIPTIVE DEVICES

POSITION STATEMENT  
for RN Practice

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*A Position Statement is not a regulation of the NC Board of Nursing and does not carry the force and effect of law and rules. A Position Statement is not an interpretation, clarification, or other delineation of the scope of practice of the Board. A Position Statement is adopted by the Board as a means of providing direction to licensees who seek to engage in safe nursing practice. Board Position Statements address issues of concern to the Board relevant to protection of the public and are reviewed regularly for relevance and accuracy to current practice, the Nursing Practice Act, and Board Administrative Code Rules.*

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### **Issue:**

Registered Nurse (RN) authority to recommend over-the counter medications and non-prescriptive devices.

### **RN Role:**

1. May recommend the use of over-the-counter (OTC) pharmaceutical products (including dietary supplements and herbal remedies) and non-prescriptive devices for an identified health-related need of an individual or client as part of her/his nursing practice.
2. When making recommendations RN is accountable for having the knowledge to make such nursing care decisions safely according to accepted standards and to monitor the outcomes of her/his actions.
3. For clients being cared for in a healthcare system, the practice of recommending over-the-counter pharmaceutical products and non-prescriptive devices must be consistent with the established policies of the system in which the registered nurse practices as well as consistent with the client's overall health-related plan of care.

### **LPN Role:**

1. Does not have the authority to independently recommend the use of over-the-counter products and non-prescriptive devices.

### **References:**

G.S. 90-171.20 (7) & (8) – Nursing Practice Act  
21 NCAC 36.0224 - RN Rule  
21 NCAC 36.0225 - LPN Rule

Origin: 10/96  
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