Common Dosage Forms of Medications

- **Tablet**
  - Hard, compressed medication in round, oval, or square shape
  - Some have enteric coating or other types of coatings, which delay release of the drug and can not be crushed or chewed
- **Capsule**
  - In a gelatin container that may be hard or soft
  - Dissolves quickly in stomach
- **Liquid** – different types of liquid medications
  - Solution – a liquid containing dissolved medication
  - Suspension – a liquid holding undissolved particles of medication that must be shaken before measuring and administering to resident
  - Syrup – a liquid medication dissolved in a sugar water to disguise its taste
  - Elixir – a sweet alcohol based solution in which medications are dissolved
- **Suppository**
  - Small solid medicated substance, usually cone-shaped
  - Melts at body temperature
  - May be administered by rectum or vagina
  - Refrigerate as directed by manufacturer
- **Inhalant**
  - Medication carried into the respiratory tract using air, oxygen or steam
  - Inhalants may be used orally or nasally
- **Topical** – applied directly to the skin surface. Topical medications include the following:
  - Ointment – a semisolid substance for application of medication to the skin or eye
  - Lotion – a medication dissolved in liquid for applying to the skin
  - Paste – a semisolid substance thicker and stiffer than an ointment containing medications
  - Cream – semisolid preparation holding medication so it can be applied to skin
  - Shampoo – liquid containing medication that is applied to the scalp and hair
  - Patches (transdermal) – medication encased in a round, square, or oval disc that is affixed to the skin
  - Powder – fine, ground form of medication that may be used to be swallowed, or may be used as on the skin for rashes
  - Aerosol sprays – solution that holds the medication suspended until it is dispensed in the form of a mist to spray on the skin