

Guidance on medications in symptom control pack

You have been provided with a pack of medicines to help ease the symptoms associated with coronavirus. The information below will guide you.

Pain, shortness of breath or cough

- Oral morphine liquid (Oramorph) 10mg morphine per 5 ml

How to use:

Use the syringe provided to draw up 1.25ml (= 2.5 mg) to 2.5ml (= 5mg). Take by mouth for cough, shortness of breath or pain. You can repeat the dose as you need to help ease the symptoms, up to every hour or less often if the symptoms have got better.

- Fentanyl patch 12 microg per hour

How to use:

Place the patch on the skin (anywhere on upper body, in area without hair). The effect of the patch increases during the first 24 hours, and lasts for three days. Make a note of where you placed the patch and when you put it on. A new patch is needed every three days. If changing a patch, take the old patch off, fold it in two and place in the bin. Replace with a new patch on a different site. **These patches are very dangerous if they become attached to anyone other than the patient (particularly children). Please check that the patch is in place regularly. If it becomes attached to another person, take patch off them immediately and seek medical advice.**

Main side effects:

Oramorph and fentanyl can make people feel sleepy.

When starting these medicines some people feel nauseous (feeling sick). The medicine in your pack for sickness (levomepromazine) can help with this. You can take this at the same time as starting the morphine or fentanyl.

Sometime people experience a dry mouth. This can be helped with taking sips of water or using a toothbrush to moisten the person's mouth with a little water on a clean cloth or toothbrush.

Sometimes people may become confused or see things that are not there (hallucinations). Using better lighting, a calm environment and reassurance can help. At high doses these medicines can cause breathing to slow. At lower doses these medicines are used to help with the feeling of breathlessness and do not cause significant slowing of the breathing.

There is a list of other possible side effects in the information leaflet about this medicine, but it is important to note that most of these occur at higher doses

Nausea or vomiting

- Levomepromazine 6mg tablet

How to use:

Take ONE tablet for nausea or vomiting. The tablet may be crushed and mix with a little water or yoghurt or ice cream to help with swallowing.. If you are still feeling sick you can repeat the dose after two hours. Maximum dose is 24mg (FOUR tablets) per 24 hours. If you are still feeling sick or are vomiting and cannot take the tablet at all, **call 111 for advice**

Main side effects:

The main side effect of levomepromazine is sleepiness. There is a list of other possible side effects in the information leaflet about this medicine, but it is important to note that most of these occur at higher doses

Agitation or restlessness or distress

- Lorazepam 1mg tablet

How to use:

Take half to one tablet and place under tongue to dissolve. Repeat the dose every hour as needed for agitation or restlessness. The maximum dose in 24 hours is 4mg (4 tablets)

Main side effects:

These medicines can make people sleepy. Sometimes people can become confused.

Reassuring your loved one, using a gentle voice, low lighting and a calm environment can all help.

Respiratory secretions

- Hyoscine Hydrobromide (Scopaderm) 1.5mg patch

How to use:

The Hyoscine patch is to help reduce respiratory secretions. Peel off the backing and stick it to the smooth hairless area behind the ear (see diagram in medicine information leaflet). Make a note of which side and when you did it so you know when it needs changing. Alternate which side you put it. When you take the used patch off, fold it in the wrapper before disposing of it safely in a bin.

Main side effects:

The most common side effects are dry eyes and mouth. Moisten your mouth with a little water on a clean cloth or toothbrush. If your eyes are dry and seem uncomfortable, you can gently bathe them too.

Hyoscine can sometimes make it harder to pass urine, if the person has not passed urine and seems uncomfortable **call 111 for advice.**

Fever

- Paracetamol 500mg tablets

Take ONE to TWO tablets every 4 to 6 hours, maximum dose is EIGHT tablets per 24 hours.

Side effects:

Paracetamol is usually well tolerated.

If you have concerns or need further advice, please call 111.