



# **‘Just in case’ medicines also called ‘anticipatory’ medicines**

## Information for Patients and Carers

### **What are ‘Just in case’ medicines?**

‘Just in case’ medicines are a small supply of medications for you to keep at home ‘just in case’ you need them at short notice.

These medicines are usually used in patients with a serious underlying health condition who become less well. These medicines can be used to help symptoms such as pain, breathlessness, feeling and being sick, feeling anxious and unsettled. Having ‘just in case’ medication to hand at home means symptoms can be managed quickly, if and when the need arises.

### **Who will administer your ‘Just in case’ medication?**

‘Just in case’ medication can only be given by a doctor or a nurse. The injections will usually be administered by a community nurse, for example, your district nurse.

### **Who provides your ‘Just in case’ medication?**

**At Home** - This medicine will be prescribed by your GP or independent nurse prescriber and the prescription will need to be collected from your local pharmacy. Some pharmacies have a delivery service on weekdays. Unfortunately district nurses are not allowed to collect the medicines for you.

**On discharge from Hospital or Hospice** - The doctors may provide ‘Just in case’ / ‘Anticipatory medications’ for you to bring home. Please let your district nurses know you have been given them.

### **What are the benefits of having ‘just in case’ medicines?**

The benefit of having a supply of ‘just in case’ medicines is that they are available when you need them. Most people are reassured by knowing that the medication is available, but you do not have to have these medications in your home if you prefer not to. However, you need to be aware that if you choose not to have them at home, it can be difficult to get these medicines in a hurry, especially at night or at weekends which may result in a delay in being able to give the medicines

Please speak to your GP or district nurse if you would like to talk about this further.

## What is the Community Palliative Care anticipatory drug chart?

The doctor or independent nurse prescriber will complete this chart so that the community nurses / care home nurses can give you the medicines, and so they know which medicines and which doses to give.

## What are the side effects of these medicines?

All medications can have side effects. The possible side effects of the anticipatory medicines will vary depending on your condition and other medications you may be taking at the time, but may include drowsiness, nausea and dry mouth. Your doctor or nurse will discuss possible side effects of the medicines with you and those caring for you if you should need to use them.

## What medicines are used?

To treat:	
Pain	Morphine, Oxycodone.
Sickness	Haloperidol, Levomepromazine.
Drying chest secretions or treating abdominal cramps	Hyoscine Butylbromide (Buscopan).
Restlessness and distress	Midazolam, Levomepromazine, Haloperidol.
Breathlessness	Morphine, Oxycodone, Midazolam.

Water for Injection is used to mix the medications.

## Storing 'Just in case' medications

These medicines should be stored in their original boxes at room temperature. Make sure they are in a safe, secure place, out of the sight and reach of children.

It is very important that you do not give these medicines to anyone else; they have been prescribed only for you.

When you no longer need these anticipatory medicines they need to be taken to your local pharmacy.

## Further information

If you have any questions about your 'Just in case' medicines you can ask your District Nurse, Palliative Care Team, Specialist Nurse, GP or Pharmacist.

If you think you need to have your 'Just in case medicines' or are having symptoms that are troubling you please contact your GP, District Nurse or Specialist Palliative Care.

## Sources used for the information in this leaflet

British Medical Association, 'Focus on anticipatory prescribing for end of life care', April 2012  
Palliative Care Formulary (4th edition), Twycross and Wilcock, October 2011  
National Gold Standards Framework, 'GSF in Primary Care', May 2006 Page 2  
Yorkshire and Humber Palliative and End of life care groups (Version 6), A guide to symptom management in Palliative care.

Your GP phone number is \_\_\_\_\_ (Mon-Fri 8am-6pm)

Calderdale patients District Nurse number is \_\_\_\_\_ (Mon-Fri 8.30-5pm)

Kirklees patients District Nurse number is - 0300 304 5555 24 hours a day.

Palliative patients and families please use Fast track code 74567 which is inputted once you call the above number.

The out of hour's District Nurse number for Calderdale patients is: 07917106263

The out of hour's District Nurse number for Kirklees patients is: 0300 304 5555

Created by Karen Hagreen, Clinical Educator at Overgate Hospice.

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**If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :**

Specialist Palliative Care Team  
Huddersfield Royal Infirmary  
Telephone No: 01484 342965

Clinical Educator  
Overgate Hospice  
Telephone No: 01422 379151

[www.cht.nhs.uk](http://www.cht.nhs.uk)

**If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.**

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obraťte se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym formacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

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