

PALLIATIVE MEDS INFO NEWSLETTER

Volume (4) Issue (3) May 2019

Palliative Meds Info is a medicines information service which provides advice on all aspects of medicines use in palliative care. Contact us at Our Lady's Hospice and Care Services on 01 4912578 or email palliativemedsinfo@olh.ie or view the Palliative Meds Info webpage available from the OLH&CS website www.olh.ie



Quick Reference Guide: The Administration of Medicines via Syringe Pump

We have developed a new quick reference guide for the administration of medicines via syringe pump. This document gives a brief overview of important considerations, diluents and a summary of compatibility issues when administering medicines via continuous subcutaneous infusion. Please note, this document is intended as a guide only and all combinations of medicines administered via syringe pump should be checked prior to administration. Please click here for link to full document: <https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/CSCI-Quick-Reference-Guide.pdf>.



Subcutaneous Anticholinergics in Terminal Respiratory Secretions

Glycopyrronium, hyoscine butylbromide and hyoscine hydrobromide are the three most commonly used agents for the management of respiratory secretions in palliative care. Research has failed to demonstrate inferiority or superiority of any of these agents and therefore all three can be considered equally efficacious. The maximum recommended dose of these agents vary in the literature. For some agents adverse effects will increase above certain doses with little additional therapeutic benefit. Please contact us if you would like further information on the available literature supporting maximum doses of these agents.

Appetite Stimulation in Palliative Care

Cachexia is a visual marker of advanced disease which can present challenges to patients and families in the palliative care setting. Generally, appetite and the urge to eat are much diminished or absent in the last weeks/days of life which can contribute to associated anorexia/cachexia. Where weight loss is concerning, calorie intake should be optimised first without the use of pharmacological interventions, and a dietician's advice should be sought about the use of food supplements where necessary. Where pharmacological appetite stimulation is deemed appropriate in the palliative setting, it is important that the emphasis is on being able to maintain enjoyment of food and eating, within the limits of the patient's condition/capability. Please contact us for further information on the choice of therapy for this indication.



Updates

➤ **Mycostatin® 100,000 units/mL (Nystatin)**

As detailed in our newsletter in April 2018, information had been circulated from Bristol-Meyers Squibb (BMS) Pharmaceuticals stating that Mycostatin® 100,000 units/mL would be discontinued by the end of 2018. This global discontinuation was voluntary and not as a result of any quality, safety or efficacy issues. We are delighted to learn, however, that the discontinuation of this product did not go ahead and Mycostatin® 100,000 units/mL continues to be available to order from wholesalers.

➤ **Conversion of methadone from PO to SC**

We have updated our document on how to convert from oral to subcutaneous methadone. Additional information has been added to this document on the potential use of buccal methadone as an alternative to subcutaneous administration of methadone in the palliative setting. Please click here for link to full document: <https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/How-do-you-convert-methadone-from-an-oral-dose-to-an-equivalent-subcutaneous-dose-2019.pdf>

➤ **Conversion of methadone from SC to PO**

We have updated our document on how to convert from subcutaneous to oral methadone. Please click here for link to full document: <https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/How-do-you-convert-methadone-from-a-subcutaneous-dose-to-an-equivalent-oral-dose-2019.pdf>

➤ **The use of oral glycopyrronium in palliative care**

Our document on the use of glycopyrronium in palliative care has been updated. This document contains information on the use of oral glycopyrronium in palliative care. There is no information to support the use of oral glycopyrronium for respiratory secretions as most information for this indication relates to subcutaneous administration. However, there is some information to support the use of oral glycopyrronium in drooling and in paraneoplastic sweating. This document provides information on the dosing and administration, availability of preparations, reimbursement in the community and common adverse effects. Please click here for link to full document:

<https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Oral-Glycopyrronium-2019.pdf>

➤ **What conversion ratio is recommended between pregabalin and gabapentin?**

We have updated our document on the conversion ratio between pregabalin and gabapentin.

Please click here for link to full document: <https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Pregabalin-and-gabapentin-2019.pdf>