

PALLIATIVE MEDS INFO NEWSLETTER

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Palliative Meds Info is a medicines information service which provides advice on all aspects of medicines use in palliative care.



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Availability Issues with Medicines in Palliative Care

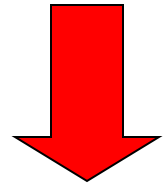
We have encountered a number of medication shortages over the previous months which have posed issues for our palliative care teams:



- **OxyNorm® (Oxycodone hydrochloride) 1mg/mL oral solution:**
 - After a period of shortage, supply has now returned to wholesalers.
- **MST® Continus® suspension 60mg:**
 - No return date listed at present.
 - Alternatives: MST® Continus® 20mg and 30mg suspension are available to order.
- **Cyklokapron® (Tranexamic acid) 500mg tablets:**
 - No return date listed at present.
 - Alternatives: Detailed in our previous newsletter Vol (4) Issue (1) April 2018. Available from: <https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Newsletter-Volume-4-Issue-1-1.pdf>. An unlicensed preparation is also available to order from wholesalers.
- **Megace® (Megestrol acetate) 160mg tablets:**
 - No return date listed at present.
 - Alternatives: Megace® (megestrol acetate) 40mg/mL oral suspension.
- **Instanyl® (fentanyl citrate) nasal spray:**
 - All strengths of this preparation are short from the wholesaler at present.
 - No return date has been listed.
- **Sublimaze® (Fentanyl) 50micrograms/mL solution for injection:**
 - After a period of shortage, supply has now returned to wholesalers.
- **Hyoscine hydrobromide 400microgram/mL and 600microgram/mL solution for injection:**
 - Hyoscine hydrobromide 600micrograms/mL solution for injection is expected to return early August.
 - Hyoscine hydrobromide 400microgram/mL solution for injection has now returned to wholesalers.
- **Dexsol® 2mg/5mL oral solution**
 - No return date listed at present
 - Alternatives: Dexamethasone 0.5mg and 2mg tablets can be crushed and mixed with water for administration. Additionally, the literature suggests that solution for injection has been administered enterally. The use of the injection orally should be reserved for cases where patients cannot tolerate the crushed tablets as the cost of dexamethasone injection is prohibitive relative to that of the tablets. Please note, both crushing and the administration of the solution for injection enterally would be unlicensed.

Potential of anti-emetic and anti-secretory agents to lower the seizure threshold

Question: To what extent do we need to consider lowering of seizure threshold with anti-emetics/anti-secretory agents at end of life?



We have recently reviewed the use of anti-secretory and anti-emetic agents and their potential to lower the seizure threshold. It is difficult to conclusively recommend one anti-secretory or anti-emetic agent over another for the management of patients with a seizure risk, and the choice of agent is a clinical decision based on the individual patient. We have developed a table which summarizes the relevant literature and provides information on the seizure threshold reducing potential of commonly used anti-emetics and anti-secretory agents. Please contact us for further information.

Updates to documents on our website

What is the guidance available for the use of adrenaline 'soaks' on wounds?

We have updated our document on the use of adrenaline 'soaks' on wounds.

Please see full details here:

<https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/What-is-the-guidance-available-for-the-use-of-adrenaline-soaks-FINAL.pdf>

Treatment options for painful mouth:

We have updated our document on treatment options for painful mouth.

Please see full details here:

<https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/What-are-the-treatment-options-for-a-painful-mouth-FINAL.pdf>

Access to medicines in the community:

We have updated our document on access to medicines in the community which provides a summary of information on medicines which are licensed in Ireland and reimbursed under the GMS/DPS. Please see full details here:

<https://olh.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Access-to-Medicines-in-the-Community-2019-1.pdf>