

**Let us know what you think and get involved**

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\*Calls from landlines are charged up to 10p per minute; calls from mobiles vary, please check with your network provider. This is not a premium-rate number.

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**When to give injections as medicine**

**Advice and information for carers**

Service provided by

## Please be aware

**The advice in this leaflet is for carers who have received specific training on providing injections and have been assessed as safe to do so. Please do not provide injections unless your nurse or doctor advises you can do this.**

## Introduction and support available

This leaflet provides information about symptoms that your relative or friend might experience.

This information relates to giving injections for symptoms when your relative or friend is **unable to swallow medication by mouth.**

You will be advised to only give up to a **maximum of three injections in any 24 hour period** before contacting the Sirona Single Point of Access (1st line) or your local hospice (2nd line) for further help and advice.

If you are concerned or would like to discuss with a healthcare professional before giving injections, please phone the numbers on the next page for advice:

**Sirona Single Point of Access (1st Line) 0300 1256789**

Your local hospice (2nd line):

**St Peter's Hospice Advice line 0117 9159430**

**Weston Hospice 01934 423900**

## Breathlessness:

### Step 1:

- You may wish to try some relaxation techniques.
- Opening a window or door can help and keep the room cool.
- Cooling the face by using a cool flannel or cloth can help.
- Portable fans are not recommended for use during outbreaks of infection.

### Step 2:

**You only need to give medicine if your relative or friend is distressed by their breathing.** If they are breathing fast but seem comfortable and settled you do not have to give treatment.

If they are distressed and you are going to administer medication please look at the Carer's Authorisation Chart and choose the medication for breathlessness.

- If there are two dose options give the lower dose.
- If their breathing has not improved an hour after giving the medication please check the minimal time interval between doses to see if it allows you to give a second dose.
- If you are not sure about giving the second dose or distress from breathing is still not controlled after the second dose, use contact telephone numbers for advice.
- If you have noticed that on several occasions the lower dose is not that effective and you are often needing to give a second dose, please phone for advice.



## Fever:

Fever is not harmful but can be treated if the symptoms cause distress

### Signs and symptoms of a fever

- shivering
- shaking
- chills
- aching muscles and joints
- other body aches
- Feeling cold despite body temperature rising

### Step 1:

- Try a cool flannel applied across the face
- Reduce room temperature - open a window or door
- Wear loose clothing
- Oral fluids if able to drink

### Step 2:

- If able to swallow please give your own supply of paracetamol by mouth.
- If not able to swallow you can discuss paracetamol suppositories with your GP.
- Two Paracetamol 500mg tablets can be given four times a day, four hours apart.

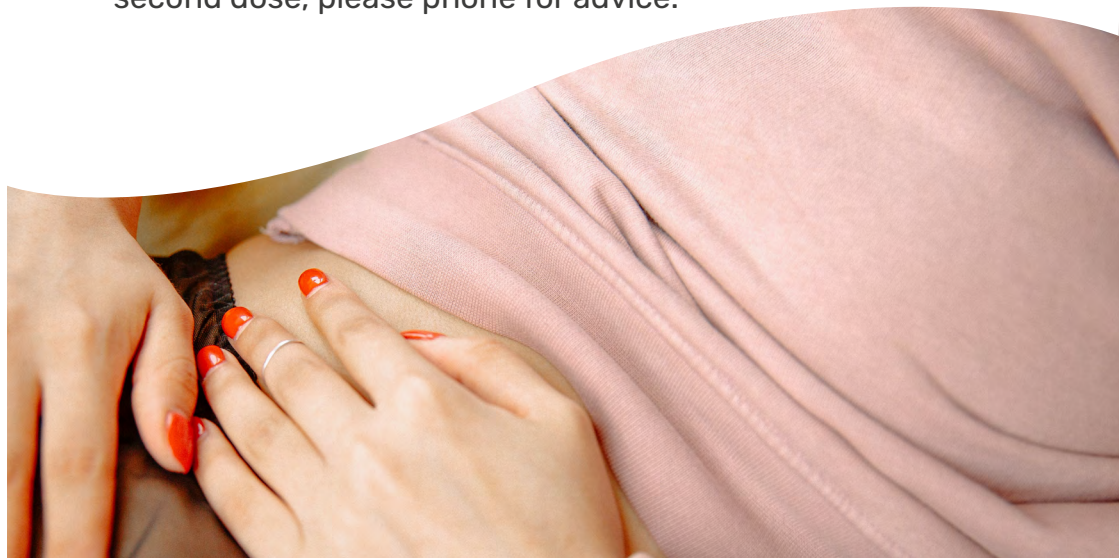
**Do not use more than eight Paracetamol 500mg tablets per 24 hours (Max 4g/24hr)**

## Pain

People may experience pain due to existing illnesses and may also develop pain as a result of excessive coughing or immobility. At the end of life they may grimace or groan to show this. Not being able to pass urine can cause pain.

### Step 1:

- A medication to help relieve pain will have been prescribed - please check the name and dose of this on the Carers Authorisation chart.
- If there are two dose options, give the lower dose.
- If their pain has not improved an hour after giving the medication, please check the minimal time interval between doses to see if it allows you to give a second dose.
- If you are not sure about giving the second dose or distress from pain is still not controlled after the second dose, please see the support available section for who to contact for advice.
- If you have noticed that on several occasions the lower dose is not that effective and you are often needing to give a second dose, please phone for advice.





## Agitation/Distress

Some people may become agitated and confused towards the end of their life. They may seem confused at times and then seem their normal selves at other times.

People who become delirious may start behaving in ways that are unusual for them. They may become more agitated than normal or feel more sleepy and withdrawn. Pain may worsen agitation (see pain advice section). Not being able to pass urine may also worsen agitation.

### Step 1:

- A medication to help relieve agitation/distress will have been prescribed - please check the name and dose of this on the Carers Authorisation chart.
- If there are two dose options, give the lower dose.
- If their agitation/distress has not improved an hour after giving the medication, please check the minimal time interval between doses to see if it allows you to give a second dose.
- If you are not sure about giving the second dose or agitation/distress is still not controlled after the second dose, please see support available for who to contact for advice.
- If you have noticed that on several occasions the lower dose is not that effective and you are often needing to give a second dose, please phone for advice.

### Step 2:

- Please telephone for advice if:
  - you are concerned your relative or your friend is unable to pass urine.
  - their agitation is persistent and distressing.

## Nausea & Vomiting

- Sometimes people may feel nauseated or sick when they are dying.
- A medication to help relieve this will have been prescribed – please check the name and dose of this on the Carers Authorisation chart.
- Phone for advice if the nausea or vomiting has not settled an hour after giving the medication.

## Rattly Breathing

Before someone dies their breathing can often become noisy. Some people call this the 'death rattle'. Try not to be alarmed by this, as it is normal. It is due to an collection of secretions and the muscles at the back of the throat relaxing.

Medicines intended to dry up secretions may not work, so try to be reassured that if your friend or relative is asleep or unconscious they are unlikely to be distressed.

### Step 1

- Repositioning your friend or relative in the bed by using pillows to support them at a different angle can help reduce rattly breathing.

### Step 2:

- Medication that may help relieve this will have been prescribed – please check the name and dose of this on the Carers Authorisation chart.

### Step 3:

- If your friend or relative seems distressed by their noisy breathing an hour after carrying out treatment, use the details in the support available section to phone for advice.