

What if I need more medicines?

Your nurse will arrange to get a prescription from your doctor for more supplies. It is best to do this before supplies run out. If you notice supplies are running low, please let your nurse know as this will be helpful. The nurses are unable to collect medication from the community pharmacy. A friend or family member will need to be available to collect the medication or the community pharmacy may be able to deliver to you at home.

If you are admitted to hospital or another care setting, the medicines can go with you as they have been prescribed for you and it is useful for others to know what you have been prescribed and have available for use.

What happens to these medicines if they are no longer needed?

They should to be taken back to your local community pharmacy. Try and do this as soon as possible. It does not have to be the same community pharmacy that the medicines were from originally. The nurses are unable to return medication to the community pharmacy. A friend or family member will need to do this on your behalf.

Any questions?

If you have any questions about your anticipatory medicines, please talk to your GP, specialist palliative care nurse, your community nurse or other health care professional.

Adapted with kind permission of NHS London Clinical Networks for Pan-London Symptom Control Medication Authorisation and Administration Record (MAAR) Chart

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or

whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

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Anticipatory Medicines at Home

A patient, family and carers guide

An information sheet for patients and their friends and family caring for them about medicines you might need at home.



What are 'anticipatory' medicines?

These are a small supply of medicines for you to keep at home just in case you need them. Your doctor or nurse will arrange a supply of these medicines for you. The medicines will come with paper forms that contain information to enable your doctor or nurse to give them to you if they are needed and your usual medicine is not working as well as it has done.

Who will give these medicines?

You cannot give yourself these medicines, and nor can a friend or family member (in exceptional circumstances we may train a family member, but this is rare). They can only be given by your doctor or nurse. A nursing folder will be provided which should be kept with the medication and will include some forms that the nurses will use to record what they have given. This is to make sure your treatment is effective and safe.

What are the benefits of having a supply of anticipatory medicines?

You may not need any of these medicines right now, but they have been prescribed for you because your doctor or nurse think that they may be needed at some point in the coming weeks or days. Sometimes it can be difficult to get these medicines in time, especially at night or at weekends so it is helpful to have them ready in your home just in case. They are usually injections and include medication for:

- ❖ Pain
- ❖ Nausea and/or sickness
- ❖ Breathlessness or reducing secretions in the throat or chest that may cause noisy breathing
- ❖ Anxiety or restlessness.

The medicines that you are given will be tailored to your needs and will depend on your condition. Your doctor or nurse will explain this to you. You may not need all or any of the medications that are prescribed.

Are there any side effects with these medicines?

All medicines can have side effects and it can take a few days to adjust to any new medicines. The possible side effects with these medicines will vary depending on your condition and other medicines you may be taking, but may include drowsiness, feeling of sickness, a dry mouth and constipation. If you need any of these medicines your doctor or nurse will discuss the possible side effects with you and look at ways to help prevent them. Always include a friend or family member in this discussion if it helps you.

How are these medications given?

If you can take medicines by mouth and you want to continue this, it may be possible to offer some of these medicines as tablets or liquids instead of an injection. Your doctor or nurse can discuss this with you. Always include a friend or family member in this discussion if it helps you.

I am taking other medicines what happens to these?

It can be helpful to see if any of your other medicines can be stopped without causing a problem, especially if you are finding it difficult to take things by mouth. It may be important to continue with some medicines either by mouth, by patch or by injection. Others may need to be adjusted according to how you are (for example, medicines for epilepsy, diabetes or heart rhythm should be checked with your doctor). Your doctor or nurse will discuss this with you first. Always include a friend or family member in this discussion if it helps you.

How do I store these medicines?

As with any medicine follow these important safety steps:

- Store in the original box and at room temperature
- Store in a safe, secure place, out of the sight and reach of children
- Do tell at least one close family member or friend where these medicines are stored so they can be found when needed
- Do not share your medicines with anyone else; they have been prescribed only for you
- Take care of the paper forms that come with these medicines as your nurse or doctor will need this information to give the medicines to you.