

Agrace
HospiceCare

What You Need to Know about Comfort Medications

Instructions for Agrace Patients and their Family/Caregivers

- The medicines in this packet treat some very common symptoms you may feel. Agrace has ordered them for you in advance, so you don't have to wait long to get comfort if you have these symptoms.
- Your Agrace nurse will show you how to use the enclosed medication syringes. The syringes are used to measure liquid medicines in metric units (milliliters or "mL").
- Your nurse has placed a round, colored sticker on each container of medicine. Look inside this booklet for color-coded information about each medicine.
- Each time you take any of these medicines, make a note on your medication log sheet (see inside).
- **CAUTION!** If you drink alcohol while using these medicines, any dizziness or drowsiness may get worse.



**Please call
an Agrace nurse
before using these
medicines for
the first time:
1-800-553-4289**



For pain or trouble breathing, try morphine sulfate (liquid)

- **How to say it:** MORE-feen SUL-fate
- **How much is one dose? 2.5 mL of liquid** (There are 5 mg of morphine in 2.5 mL of liquid.)
- **How to take it:** Your nurse will show you how to take morphine and will offer ideas for how to take it if you have trouble swallowing.
- **Common side effects:** Dizziness, drowsiness, nausea, itching and constipation. Most side effects (except constipation) go away after a few days.*



For anxiety, restlessness or nausea, try lorazepam

- **How to say it:** lor-A-ze-pam
- **Also called:** Ativan (AT-uh-van)
- **How much is one dose?** One pill (0.5 mg)
- **How to take it:** Swallow one pill by mouth.
- **If you cannot swallow whole pills,** your nurse will show you how to crush one pill and dissolve it in a small amount (0.5 mL) of water or other liquid. Place the crushed medicine inside your cheek or under your tongue. Do not put whole pills in your cheek or under your tongue.
- **Common side effects:** Fatigue (tiredness), drowsiness and dizziness.*



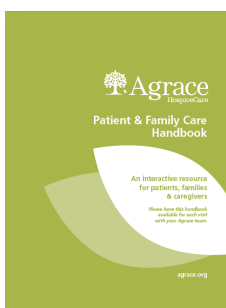
For noisy or wet breathing, try hyoscyamine

- **How to say it:** hye-oh-SYE-a-meen
- **Also called:** Levsin
- **How much is one dose?** One pill (0.125 mg)
- **How to take it:** Place one pill inside your cheek or under your tongue, where it will dissolve.
- **Common side effects:** Drowsiness, dizziness, headache and dry mouth.*



For severe confusion or nausea, try haloperidol (liquid)

- **How to say it:** hallo-PERRY-doll
- **Also called:** Haldol (HAL-doll)
- **How much is one dose?** 0.25 mL of liquid (There is 0.5 mg of haloperidol in 0.25 mL of liquid.)
- **How to take it:** Swallow it, or place it inside your cheek or under your tongue if you have trouble swallowing.
- **Common side effects:** Dizziness, restless movement, headache, blurred vision, dry mouth and decreased urination.*



*Anytime you have concerns about these symptoms, medicines or their side effects, please ask your Agrace nurse. You can also find tips for relieving common side effects in your Agrace Patient & Family Care Handbook:

Constipation, page 13; **Fatigue**, page 16;
Nausea, page 17; **Restlessness**, page 21;
Dry mouth, page 29

SAMPLE Comfort Medication Log

Date	Time	Symptom	Medication	Dose	Result
4/10	1:30 PM	7 out of 10 leg pain	Morphine	2.5 mL	Pain went down to 3 out of 10 at 2:30 PM
4/11	4:55 AM	Anxiety	Lorazepam	0.5 mg	Sleeping at 5:45 AM
5/14	8:00 AM	Nausea	Haldol	0.5 mg / 0.25 mL	Resting comfortably at 9:15 AM
5/19	4:00 PM	Wet breathing	Hyoscyamine	0.125 mg	Doesn't seem better at 5:00 PM, called Agrace nurse



Comfort Medication Log

Record the details each time you take (or caregivers give) a dose of any of these comfort medications.



Date	Time	Symptom	Medication	Dose	Result

Comfort Medication Log *Continued*

Date	Time	Symptom	Medication	Dose	Result



Our Mission:
Partnering with patients and families to improve quality of life throughout serious illness