

**Just in Case
Medicines
FAQs**

**Anticipatory
'Just In Case'
Injectable
Medicines**

St Raphael's
Your Local Hospice



What are 'just in case' medicines?

These are a small supply of injectable 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, or if you are unable to swallow and it needs to be taken in a different form.

Who will give these medicines?

Normally the medication is 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 Just in Case medicines?

You may not need any of these medicines right now, however they have been prescribed for you because your doctor or nurse think that they may be needed at some point in the coming days or weeks.

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 needed.

They are 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. This may include drowsiness, a 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?

These medicines are given by injection under the skin, often referred to as a subcutaneous or 'subcut' injection. They can be given by a trained healthcare professional such as a nurse, doctor, paramedic or trained associate.

I am taking other medicines - what happens to these?

Speak to your General Practitioner or the St Raphael's Hospice Team and request a review of your medications. We recommend that you keep the 'just in case' injectable medication separately from your oral medication to avoid any confusion.

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

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 to 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 pharmacist, GP, the St Raphael's Hospice team, your community / district nurse or other healthcare professional.



**For further
assistance
and advice**

Contact us

**St Raphael's Hospice
London Road, Cheam
SUTTON SM3 9DX**

020 8099 7777

www.straphaels.org.uk

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