

T34 SYRINGE PUMP – Community Patient information leaflet



This leaflet will explain what it is, how it works and what to do if there are any worries or concerns.

What is a syringe driver?

A syringe driver is a small, quiet pump that is powered by a battery. A syringe which contains medicines sits on the top of the pump. A fine tube will be attached to the syringe filled with medicines. The driver slowly gives medicines over 24 hours. The plastic tube can stay under the skin for up to 3 days and will be checked by the District Nurse.

Why is a syringe driver needed?

A syringe driver is very useful to treat symptoms, at any stage of an illness or treatment, if important medication is unable to be taken by mouth. This can also be for other reasons:

- Being too weak to swallow medication.
- Feeling very sick or being sick.
- The body cannot absorb the tablets or liquid medicines properly.
- Symptoms are difficult to control.

What medicine is in the syringe driver?

The type of medicine that is put in the syringe will be prescribed by the GP and will depend on the symptoms being felt. The levels or doses of the medicines are also worked out separately for each person.

Some symptoms can be treated using medicines in the syringe pump, such as:

- Pain
- Feeling very sick
- Being sick
- Being restless or anxious
- Noisy breathing

It is natural to feel nervous when starting any new treatment. If there are any concerns or worries about why a syringe pump is needed, or any other questions, it is important to ask the District Nurse who will help and explain.

Starting the syringe pump.

The District Nurse will set up the syringe pump, they will bring all of the equipment needed. The medicines will usually be given over a twenty-four-hour period. The District Nurse will call each day to fill a new syringe with the medicine, check the syringe pump, the tubing and where it goes into the skin. They will also check that the doses are at the right level.

It can take a few hours for the medicine to work, so when the syringe pump is set up the District Nurse may give an injection to treat any symptoms.

The syringe pump is working when the green light is flashing regularly and “Pump delivering” is shown in the display.

Looking after the syringe driver.

- Keep it out of the sun and don't let it get hot
- Try not to drop it
- Keep it dry

Is it ok to have a shower or bath?

- Yes, but it is important to keep the syringe pump and the dressing dry. Talk to the District Nurse about how to do this.

Contact the District Nurse if:

- The syringe driver gets wet.
- Symptoms remain or change, more medication may be needed.
- The syringe pump is dropped.
- The skin around the plastic tube is red, swollen or painful,
- The tube has come out.
- The syringe pump alarms.

If the syringe pump alarms, please do not try to fix it, call the District Nurse so it can be checked.

Swansea and Neath and Port Talbot District Nurses.

District Nurses Single Point of Access – 01792 343360 office hours are 8.00am – 4.45pm Monday – Friday.

Swansea Area Out Of Hours (After 5pm, weekends and Bank Holidays)
– 01792 702222

Neath Area Out Of Hours (After 5pm, weekends and Bank Holidays) –
01639 862000

Hospital Switchboard will take the details and pass onto to on call District Nurse to return contact.

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Swansea Bay University Health Board

Authorisation Form for Publication onto COIN

PLEASE ENSURE THAT ALL QUESTIONS ARE ANSWERED – IF NOT APPLICABLE PLEASE PUT N/A

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