

Prescribing Algorithm for Restlessness in the DYING PHASE

Version History

Version	Date	Summary of Change/Process
1.0	2008	Agreed by SPAGG
1.1	March 2011	Circulated to Jackie Dominey, John Speakman and Diana Webb
1.2	June 2011	Updated by John Speakman and circulated to SPAGG and Network Site Specific Group for reviewing
1.3	July 2011	Circulated to Supportive and Palliative Care Network Site Specific Group for final review and comments
1.4	18.07.11	Following consultation for presentation to the guidelines sub group.
2.0	03.08.11	Reviewed and endorsed by Guidelines Sub Group

Date Approved by Network Governance	August 2011
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Date for Review	August 2014
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Scope

This is for use by professionals in all healthcare settings caring for patients experiencing restlessness in the dying phase.

Key points for consideration

- This algorithm should be considered in conjunction with other Network agreed guidance relating to the care of patients in the dying phase.
- If the patient is not in the dying phase then please consult the West Midlands Guidelines for symptom control in palliative care.
- Before initiating drug treatment, the patient should be assessed for reversible causes of agitation or restlessness, including:
 - Urinary retention.
 - Constipation.
 - Pain.
 - Drug toxicity e.g., opioids, phenytoin, digoxin.
 - Biochemical abnormalities e.g. Ca, Na.
 - Hypoxia.
 - Spiritual distress.
- If patients are not settling / comfortable after the given time period then further help can be sought from West Midlands Palliative Care Physicians Guidance

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or other Network guidelines found at the link below, alternatively contact the out of hours palliative care on call.


<http://www.birminghamcancer.nhs.uk/staff/clinical-guidelines/supportive-and-palliative-care>

- Contact details for supportive and palliative care can be found in the Network supportive and palliative care directory located here: <http://www.birminghamcancer.nhs.uk/staff/supportive-and-palliative-care/supportive-care>, or at the end of the referral guideline located here: <http://www.birminghamcancer.nhs.uk/staff/clinical-guidelines/supportive-and-palliative-care>

Approval Signatures

Pan Birmingham Cancer Network Governance Committee Chair

Name: Doug Wulff

Signature: 

Date: August 2011

Pan Birmingham Cancer Network Manager

Name: Karen Metcalf

Signature: 

Date: August 2011

Network Site Specific Group Clinical Chair

Name: John Speakman

Signature: 

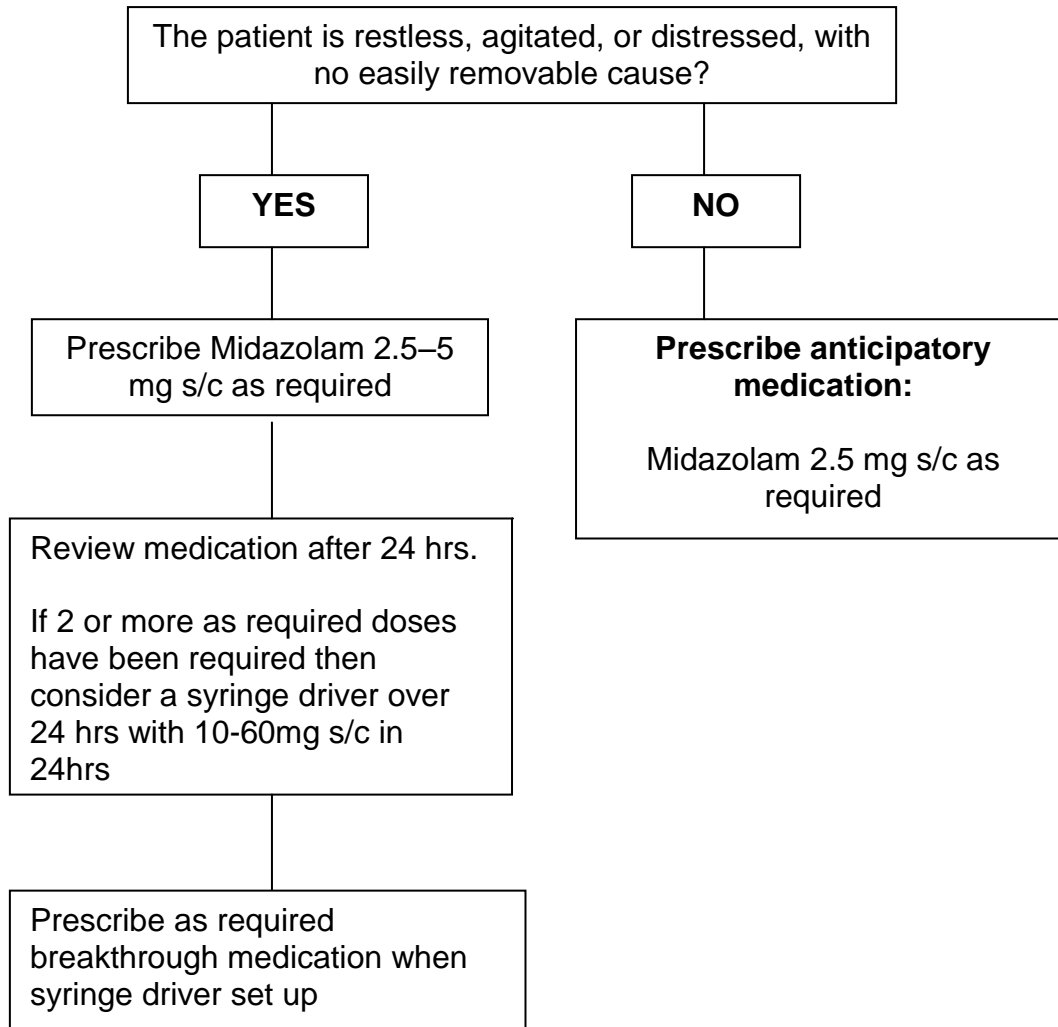
Date: August 2011

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Prescribing Algorithm for Restlessness in the DYING PHASE

The information for this algorithm is taken from the West Midlands Palliative Care Symptom Control Guidelines.

Note: if patient is at risk of fitting, an increase in dose may be necessary.



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