

Information about your McKinley T34 syringe pump

Palliative Care

Information for Patients

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What is a McKinley T34 syringe pump?

This is a small portable pump which is battery operated. It allows medicines to be given steadily under the skin over a 24 hour period.

Why do I need one?

The syringe pump is an alternative way of delivering medicines to control your symptoms e.g. this may be for pain, breathlessness or helping sickness.

It may be needed if:

- you are having difficulty swallowing tablets or medicines.
- you are being sick.
- giving medicines in this way may help improve your symptoms.
- a syringe driver pump may be used at any stage of your illness to control your symptoms.

How does it work?

Your nurse will insert a small needle or plastic tube under your skin. This will be connected by a piece of tubing to a syringe containing your medicines. The syringe is secured to the syringe pump and placed into a protective outer case.

The syringe pump gradually pushes the syringe plunger to deliver the medicines over 24 hours.

Your nurse will change the syringe every 24 hours. The needle/plastic tube will be secured with a clear dressing and usually only needs changing every 7 days unless red, swollen or painful.

How do I know if the syringe pump is working properly?

The person providing your syringe pump will have checked it is working before setting it up.

A small light above the "ON/OFF" button will flash green regularly. If it turns red, there is a problem with the pump and you should contact the nurse as soon as possible.

Who will look after it?

Your nurse will check regularly that the pump is operating correctly, that you are receiving the medication prescribed and that the needle/tube is comfortable.

What do I do if the alarm sounds?

The most important thing is not to worry. The pump alarm sounds for different reasons including if the medication is near to running out.

Contact your nurse immediately. Please do not try to do anything yourself without speaking to the nurse. Your symptoms won't change straight away even if the medicine was stopped.

Some do's

- When you are walking around, carry the pump using the carry case provided (this helps protect it from the sun) or a small bag.
- When you are in bed or resting in a chair, the pump can be put on a flat surface next to you.
- You should keep the pump and cannula site dry.
- Speak to your nurse before showering/bathing.
- Try to keep mobile phones that are switched on about an arm's length away, as they may affect the way the pump works.

Some don'ts

- Do not interfere with the syringe pump.
- Do not get the pump or needle site wet.
- Do not drop it.
- Do not expose to heat or bright sunlight.

Contact your nurse if:

- you are worried that your pump is not working properly or has been damaged.
- the colour of the medicines has changed or become cloudy.
- the skin around the needle/tube is red, swollen or painful.

Going home

You may still need your syringe pump at home. The district nurse will visit daily to look after it.

Contact details

If you are worried that your syringe pump is not working properly then please contact Single Point of Access (SPA) Team on Tel: 0300 300 1000.

Returning the syringe pump

The T34 syringe pump should be returned when your pump is no longer needed. A nurse will usually disconnect it and return it for you.

If you have any queries please get in touch.

It should be returned to:

Medical Equipment Management Service (MEMS)

Medical Physics, Level 1

Sandringham Building

Leicester Royal Infirmary

Infirmary Square

Leicester LE1 5WW

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