

COMMONLY USED DRUGS AND DOSES

Drug and formulation	Indication	Route, dose and frequency	Ceiling dose
Amitriptyline 'Endep®' Tablets: 10mg, 25mg, 50mg	Neuropathic pain May assist sleep	PO 0.2–1mg/kg/dose Nocte (Can also be given twice daily)	50mg/day
Benzotropine 'Cogentin®' Amp: 1mg/ml Tablets: 0.5mg, 2mg	Extrapyramidal side effects Dystonia	IV/IM < 12yrs: 0.02mg/kg/dose stat. > 12yrs: 1–2mg/dose stat. Repeat after 15min if required	2mg/dose
Carbamazapine 'Tegretol®' Tablets: 100mg, 200mg Tablets CR: 200mg, 400mg Controlled release tablets should be given every 12hrs Liquid: 20mg/ml	Seizures Neuropathic pain	PO/PR 2.5mg/kg/dose twice daily or 5mg/kg/dose nocte, increase over 2 weeks to 5–10mg/kg/dose Q8–12h	2g/day
Chloral Hydrate Liquid 50mg/ml, 100mg/ml	Sedation	PO/PR 10–20mg/kg/dose Q6 h prn Can use higher doses (up to 50mg/kg) with care	1g/dose
Chlorpromazine 'Largactil®' Tablets: 10mg, 25mg, 100mg Liquid: 5mg/ml, 10mg/ml Amp: 25mg/ml	Agitation Nausea	PO/IV 0.1–1mg/kg/dose Q6 – 8h	< 5yrs: 40mg/day 5–12yrs: 75mg/day > 12yrs: 300mg/day
Clonazepam 'Rivotril®' Tablets: 0.5mg, 2mg Liquid: 2.5mg/ml Amp: 1mg/ml + diluent 1 drop = 100mcg 25 drops = 1ml	Agitation/Anxiety Seizures Dyspnoea	PO/Sublingual < 12yrs: 0.01mg–0.05mg/kg/dose Q8–12h > 12yrs: Initially 0.5mg/dose Q8–12h IV/SC 0.125–0.50mg stat (slow). Repeat if required.	0.2mg/kg/day for children 20mg/day for adults 1mg/dose (IV/SC)
Codeine (S8) Tablets: 30mg Liquid: 5mg/ml	Analgesic	PO/PR 0.5–1mg/kg/dose Q4–6h	60mg/dose
Cyclizine (SAS) Tablets: 50mg Amp: 50mg/ml	Nausea	PO/IV/SC 0.5–1mg/kg/dose Q6–8h Can be administered as continuous infusion. (Use water for injection)	50mg/dose

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Dexamethasone Tablets: 0.5mg, 4mg Amp: 4mg/ml	Cerebral Oedema Spinal cord compression	PO/IV/SC 0.25–0.5mg/kg/dose Q6–12h Seek specialist advice: A bolus dose of 1–2mg/kg can be given initially prior to urgent imaging if available/appropriate.	20mg/dose
	Anti-inflammatory (peripheral nerve compression, pain, bowel obstruction)	PO/IV/SC 0.1–0.25mg/kg/dose Q6–12h	8mg/dose
	Nausea	PO/IV 0.1–0.25mg/kg/dose Q6h–daily	8mg/dose
Diazepam ‘Valium’ Tablets: 2mg, 5mg Liquid: 1mg/ml Amp: 5mg/ml Enema: 5mg	Anxiety Muscle spasm	PO 0.05–0.3mg/kg/dose Q6–12h IV 0.1–0.3mg/kg Q4h–12h	40mg/day
	Seizures	IV 0.1–0.3mg/kg/dose stat. PR 0.3–0.5mg/kg/dose Repeat at 15–30 minute intervals if required.	10mg/dose
Diclofenac ‘Voltaren®’ Tablets: 12.5mg, 25mg, 50mg Tablets (EC): 25mg, 50mg Suppositories: 12.5mg, 25mg, 50mg, 100mg	Anti-inflammatory	PO/Rectal 1mg/kg/dose Q8–12h with food	50mg/dose
Docosate Sodium ‘Coloxyl®’ Tablets: 50mg, 120mg	Constipation	PO < 3yrs: consider poloxamer drops 3–6yrs: 50mg Q8h – Daily 6–12yrs: 50–120mg Q8h – Daily > 12yrs: 100–150mg Q8h – Daily	< 12yrs: 240mg/day > 12yrs: 500mg
Docosate Sodium ‘Coloxyl® with Senna’	Constipation	PO 1–2 tablets/dose Q8h – Daily	6 tablets/day
Domperidone ‘Motilium®’ Tablet: 10.mg	Nausea Gastrointestinal stasis	PO 0.2–0.4mg/kg/dose Q6–8h	20mg/dose
Gabapentin Tablets: 600mg; 800mg Capsules: 100mg; 300mg; 400mg Capsules may be opened and dissolved in water.	Neuropathic pain Itch	PO 5mg/kg/dose Daily – Q8h (increase dose over days – weeks). Day 1: Daily Day 2: Q12h Day 3: Q8h	20mg/kg/dose
Glycopyrrolate ‘Robinul®’ Tablets: 1mg (SAS) Amp: 0.2mg/ml (can be given orally)	Reduce secretions	PO 40–100mcg/kg/dose Q6–8h IV/SC 4–10mcg/kg/dose Q6–8h Can be administered as continuous infusion. Use water for injection.	400mcg/dose

Drug and formulation	Indication	Route, dose and frequency	Ceiling dose
Haloperidol 'Serenace®' Liquid: 2mg/ml Tablets: 0.5mg, 1.5mg, 5mg Amp: 5mg & 10mg/ml.	Agitation/Delerium Nausea/Vomiting	PO/IV/SC < 12yrs: 0.01–0.1mg/kg/dose Q8–12h > 12yrs: 500mcg–2.5mg Q8–12h Can be administered as continuous infusion.	7.5mg/day
Hyoscine N-Butylbromide 'Buscopan®' Tablet: 10mg Amp: 20mg/ml	Antispasmodic (renal, gastrointestinal)	PO/IV/SC 0.5mg/kg/dose Q6h	20mg/dose
Hyoscine Hydrobromide Tablets: 0.3mg (Kwells®) Amp: 400mcg/ml Patch: 1.5mg (Scopoderm®) (SAS)	Reduce secretions	PO 2–7yrs: ¼ tablet/dose Q6h > 7yrs: ½–1 tablet /dose Q6h IV/SC 6–10mcg/kg/dose Q6h Can be administered as continuous infusion. Transdermal < 3yrs: ¼ patch Q72h 3–9yrs: ½ patch Q72h > 9yrs: 1 patch Q72h	400mcg/dose
Ibuprofen 'Nurofen®' Liquid: 20mg/ml Tablet: 200mg, 400mg	Anti-inflammatory	PO 5–10mg/kg/dose Q6–8h with food	400mg/dose
Lactulose 'Duphalac®' Liquid: 0.67g/ml liquid 70%	Constipation	PO 1ml/kg/dose Q12h – daily	45ml/dose
Levomepromazine 'Nozinan®' (SAS) Tablet: 25mg Amp: 25mg/ml	Nausea and vomiting	PO /IV/SC < 12yrs: 0.1mg–1mg/kg/dose Q12h – daily > 12yrs: 6.25–25mg Q12h – daily Can be administered as continuous infusion.	25mg/day 50mg/day
	Terminal restlessness	IV/SC 0.3–3mg/kg/day as a continuous infusion.	
Loperamide 'Imodium®' Capsule/tablet/melts: 2mg	Diarrhoea	PO 0.05–0.1mg/kg/dose Q8–12h	2mg/dose
Lorazepam 'Ativan®' Tablets: 1mg, 2.5mg	Anxiety Anticipatory nausea and vomiting. Dyspnoea	PO 0.02–0.05mg/kg/dose Q8–24h Can be administered sublingually	2.5mg/dose

Drug and formulation	Indication	Route, dose and frequency	Ceiling dose
Macrogol 3350 and electrolytes 'Movicol®' 'OsmoLax®' 'ClearLax®'	Constipation	PO Movicol ® 2–5yrs: 1 x Movicol-Half sachet Daily 6–11yrs: 1 x Movicol sachet/dose Daily > 12yrs: 1–2 x Movicol sachet/dose Daily (May need to increase to Q8h). ClearLax ® Children 2–6yrs: dissolve 1/2 of contents of 1 sachet in any 100ml liquid, then drink Adults, children greater than or equal to 6yrs: dissolve contents of 1 sachet in any 120–250ml liquid, then drink. Osmolax ® Children 4–5yrs: initially one 8.5g scoop mixed with 1/2 cup liquid once daily. Children 6–12yrs: two 8.5g scoops (or one 17g scoop) mixed with 1 cup liquid once daily; adjust dose up or down to produce regular soft stools. Adults, children > 12yrs: one 17g scoop mixed with 1 cup (approx 240ml) liquid once daily. Chronic constipation: may reduce to one 8.5g scoop mixed with 1/2 cup (approx 120ml) liquid daily, according to individual response.	Titrate dose to effect
Metoclopramide 'Maxolon®' <i>Tablet: 10mg</i> <i>Syrup discontinued.</i> <i>Amp: 10mg/2ml</i>	Nausea and vomiting	PO/IV/SC 0.1–0.2mg/kg/dose Q6h Can be administered as continuous infusion.	10mg/dose
Midazolam 'Hypnovel®' <i>Amp: 5mg/ml, 15mg/3ml, 50mg/10ml.</i> <i>Plastic 5mg/ml amps can be used nasally or buccally.</i>	Agitation Seizures Dyspnoea Premedication	Buccal/PO/Intranasal < 20kg: 0.3–0.5mg/kg/dose > 20kg: 5–10mg/dose Dose can be repeated. IV/SC 0.1–0.2mg/kg/dose Q4h (Dose can be titrated) Can be administered as continuous infusion 1–5mcg/kg/min (to make this infusion add 3 x bodyweight (kg) of midazolam inmg to 50ml of normal saline or dextrose solution and infuse at rate of 1–5ml/hour) or 0.2–1mg/kg/24 hr as a starting dose.	10–15mg/dose – higher in refractory cases

Drug and formulation	Indication	Route, dose and frequency	Ceiling dose
Morphine sulphate (S8) Immediate release Tablet: ‘Sevredol®’ 10mg, 20mg ‘Anamorph®’ 30mg Liquid: ‘Ordine®’ 1mg/ml, 2mg/ml, 5mg/ml, 10mg/ml Amp: Morphine sulphate: 5mg/ml, 10mg/ml, 15mg/ml, 30mg/ml Morphine tartrate: 120mg/1.5ml, 400mg/5ml Controlled Release MS Contin® – tablet, suspension Kapanol® – capsule (see page 48)	Analgesic for moderate – severe pain	PO Neonate – 3 mo: 0.05–0.1mg/kg/dose Q4–6h 3–6 mo: 0.1mg/kg/dose Q4–6h > 6 mo: 0.2–0.5mg/kg/dose Q4–6h SC/IV Neonate – 3 mo: 0.025mg/kg/dose Q6h 3–6 mo: 0.05mg/kg/dose Q6h > 6 mo: 0.1–0.2mg/kg/dose Q4–6h	Increase dose as required – no max dose.
	Dyspnoea	30–50 % of the dose used for pain PO 0.05–0.1mg/kg/dose Q4–6h SC/IV 0.025–0.5mg/kg/dose Q4–6h	
Naloxone ‘Narcan’ Amp: 400mcg/ml	Acute respiratory depression related to opioids Itch	IV 5 mcg/kg. Repeat every 2–3 minutes until adequate respirations are established. Caution in children receiving chronic opioid therapy. IV 0.5mcg/kg may assist itch. Consider low dose infusion (0.5mcg/kg/hr).	100mcg/dose
Octreotide	Bowel obstruction or Intractable diarrhoea and gastrointestinal fluid loss	IV/SC 1–10mcg/kg/ dose Q8h Can be administered as a subcutaneous infusion. 25mcg/kg/24 hours. Initial dose for older children is 300mcg/day. Titrate to effect over 24–48 hours.	500mcg/dose 1000mcg/day
	Acute variceal bleeding	Load 1mcg/kg/dose then 1–5mcg/kg/hour (increase every 8 hours if no effect)	50mcg/hr
Omeprazole ‘Losec®’ Tablets: 10mg, 20mg Capsule: 20mg Some hospitals prepare a mixture for small doses and nasogastric tubes.	Antacid Reflux Oesophagitis/ Gastritis	PO 0.5–1mg/kg/dose Q12h – daily	30mg/dose
Ondansetron ‘Zofran®’ Tablets/wafers: 4mg, 8mg Liquid: 4mg/5ml Amp: 4mg & 8mg/2ml Suppository: 16mg	Nausea and vomiting	PO/IV/SC 0.15mg/kg/dose Q8h PR (> 12yrs) 16mg/dose Daily	8mg/dose

Drug and formulation	Indication	Route, dose and frequency	Ceiling dose
Oxycodone (S8) Immediate Release Tablet: 5mg (Endone®) Capsule: 5mg, 10mg, 20mg (Oxynorm®) Liquid: 1mg/ml Amp: 10mg/ml, 20mg/2ml Suppository : 30mg (Proladone®) Controlled Release Oxycontin® (See page 48)	Analgesic for moderate – severe pain	PO 0.1–0.25mg/kg/dose Q4–6h	Increase dose as required – no max dose.
Paracetamol ‘Panadol®’ Liquid: 24mg/ml, 48mg/ml, 50mg/ml, 100mg/ml, Tablet/capsule: 500mg Amp: 500mg; 1g Suppositories; 125mg, 250mg, 500mg	Analgesic Antipyretic	PO/PR/IV 15mg/kg/dose Q4–6h For neonates and children weighing <10 kg to approximately 1 year of age the IV dose is 7.5mg/kg/dose Q6h	< 6 mo: 60mg/day > 6 mo: 90mg/day
Paraffin Liquid Liquid: 50%	Constipation	PO 1–3ml/kg/dose Daily	50ml/day
Phenobarbitone Tablet: 30mg Liquid: 3mg/ml, 10mg/ml Amp: 200mg/ml	Seizures	PO/IV/SC (slow) 2.5–5mg/kg/dose Q12 – Daily (maintenance) Loading dose: IV (slow)/SC (slow)/IM 20–30mg/kg Can be administered as continuous infusion. Essential to dilute injection in 10 times the volume of water and use a separate subcutaneous site if given as subcutaneous infusion.	600mg/day – higher in refractory cases 1g/dose
Phenytoin ‘Dilantin®’ Infatab: 50mg (chewable) Capsules: 30mg, 100mg Liquid: 6mg/ml Amp: 50mg/ml	Seizures	PO/IV 2mg/kg/dose Q8–12h (maintenance) Loading dose IV 15–20mg/kg over 20 minutes (can be given in 3 parts over 6 hours orally)	100mg/dose – higher in refractory cases 1.5g
Poloxamer ‘Coloxyl drops®’ Liquid: 10%	Laxative	PO < 6 mo: 10 drops/dose Q8h 6–18 mo: 15 drops/dose Q8h 18 mo–3yrs: 25 drops/dose Q8h	
Prochlorperazine ‘Stemetil®’ Tablets: 5mg Amp: 12.5mg/ml Suppository: 5,25mg	Nausea and vomiting	PO/IV/IM/PR 0.2mg/kg/dose Q6–12h Caution with IV use due to cardiovascular side effects. Give as a slow IV push (maximum rate is 5mg/min, preferably slower)	Oral 10mg/dose

Drug and formulation	Indication	Route, dose and frequency	Ceiling dose
Promethazine 'Phenergan®' Tablets: 10mg, 25mg Liquid: 1mg/ml Amp: 25mg/ml	Nausea and vomiting Itch Sedation	PO/IV/SC 0.125–0.5mg/kg/dose Q6–8h	150mg/day
Ranitidine 'Zantac®' Tablets: 150mg, 300mg (effervescent tabs 150mg) Liquid: 15mg/ml Amp: 10mg/ml, 25mg/ml	Antacid Reflux Oesophagitis/ Gastritis	PO 2–4mg/kg/dose Q8–12h IV 1mg/kg/dose Q8h	300mg/day (POI) 50mg/dose (IV)
Senosides 'Senokot®' Tablets/chocolate squares: 7.5mg	Constipation (Stimulant Laxative)	PO 2–6yrs: ½–1 tablet/dose Nocte 6–12yrs: 1–2 tablet/dose Nocte >12yrs: 1–4 tablet/dose Nocte	30mg/day
Sucralfate Tablet: 1g Some pharmacies make cream.	Mucosal bleeding/ oozing	½–1 tablet dispersed in water and applied topically as required	
Tranexamic Acid 'Cyclokapron®' Tablet: 500mg IV formulation available (SAS)	Antifibrinolytic for bleeding Also used for mouthwash	PO 15–25mg/kg/dose Q8–12h 500mg tablet dissolved in 5–10ml water (or 5% mouth wash) Rinse 10ml in mouth for 2 minutes then spit out Q6h	1.5g/dose

The drugs included are those commonly used for symptom management. This information is designed to be a dose guide only. Each patient's dose requirements may vary and should be adjusted based on the clinical situation. Readers should also refer to larger texts on Palliative Care for further drugs, indications and side effects. All care has been made to ensure that doses are accurate, but the user is advised to check these carefully and to consult the above references and the text of this guide for potential toxicities. Contact with an experienced pharmacist is also advisable. The authors shall not take responsibility for any errors in publication of drug doses or in drug administration.

References/glossary for drug chart

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- Ceiling dose:** Increases in dose beyond the ceiling dose may not elicit any further increase in therapeutic effect. The addition of an alternative drug should be considered (either to replace or be used in conjunction with the existing therapy).
- Enteric coated:** Coated with a material that permits transit through the stomach to the small intestine before the medication is released. This may minimise adverse gastrointestinal effects. These tablets/capsules cannot be crushed or chewed.
- S8:** (Schedule 8) Poisons schedule. Special restrictions apply regarding prescribing, dispensing and supply.
- SAS:** Special Access Scheme Medications unavailable in Australia that may be imported via the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). Special documentation required and supply issues as these items are sourced from overseas suppliers.