

**Patient  
Information**

# Using a Mckinley T34 syringe pump

## Introduction

This leaflet will give you information about using a Mckinley T34 syringe pump (sometimes called a syringe driver).

There are times when it is not possible or it is too difficult for you to take medications by mouth. Another way is to use a syringe pump; this will give you the medication in a controlled continuous dose (known as a continuous infusion).

The reasons why a syringe pump has been chosen as the best way for you to receive your medication will have been discussed with you.

## What is a syringe pump?

The syringe pump is battery operated and is kept inside a clear locked box; your nurse will have a key. The pump holds a syringe which contains your medication. This medication travels down a fine tube and through a needle or plastic tube which has been placed under your skin on your upper arm, upper leg, abdomen, upper chest or occasionally the shoulder. The syringe pump slowly pushes the syringe plunger so that you receive your medication over a 24 hour period. The syringe will be changed every 24 hours by your nurse.

## What are the advantages of using a syringe pump?

- It means you have fewer injections
- Your medication is kept at a constant level in your body
- The syringe only needs changing once every 24 hours
- It is portable so you can move about as you normally would

## Care of your syringe pump and needle site

A clear dressing will hold the needle or plastic tube in place. You will have a new dressing when the needle is replaced.

It is important not to get the dressing wet. You are advised not to have a bath or shower when the syringe pump is in use.

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## Patient Information

Steam can also harm the working parts of the pump. If you wish to have a bath or shower while you have a syringe pump fitted, your nurse will advise you on how this can be done safely.

If your dressing becomes loose or you are concerned about the needle site for any reason please let your nurse know. The nurse will check that the needle is in the correct place and replace the dressing if needed. You must not put your syringe pump in water. If the syringe pump is accidentally dropped, put in water, or contaminated by fluids in any way please take the battery out and contact your nurse immediately. Your nurse will bring you a new syringe pump and send the other one to an engineer for inspection.

If you are moved to another care setting, such as your home, nursing home, care home or another hospital, the syringe pump may be changed. Not all care settings use the same model of syringe pump.

## Risks

Please report the following to your nurse:

- Soreness, redness, irritation or swelling at the site where the needle goes into your skin.
- If the needle accidentally comes out (the nurse will decide what action to take).

## If the syringe pump makes a noise or has been damaged

The most important thing is not to worry. The pump may make an alarm sound but it will silence itself in time. The alarm will sound when the syringe is nearly empty or is empty. Do not alter any part of the syringe pump. Contact your nurse, who will visit or advise you what to do.

## What should I do when I no longer need the pump?

When the syringe pump is no longer needed, please contact your nurse who will come and collect it from you.

**Patient  
Information****Contact information**

If you have any questions or concerns while you are in hospital please speak to the ward nurse. If you are in nursing or residential care the nurse on duty will be able to help.

If you are at home the community nurse will be able to answer your questions.

**Out of hours**

If you need advice outside of normal office hours, please contact the District Nursing Services:

**District Nursing Services**

Tel: 0300 421 0555

**The Palliative Care Team****Cheltenham General Hospital**

Tel: 0300 422 3447

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

**Gloucestershire Royal Hospital**

Tel: 0300 422 5179

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

**Community Specialist Palliative Care Team**

Tel: 0300 422 5370

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

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**Tel: 0300 422 3231**  
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