

## RESTLESSNESS / AGITATION AT END OF LIFE

**Consider and manage common causes of restlessness** e.g. urinary retention, faecal impaction, hypoxia and pain

Patient is Restless/Agitated

Patient is NOT Restless/Agitated

**Non Drug Intervention is Essential:** Reassurance, calm environment, consider the use of sound/music  
Have you taken into account their spiritual needs?

### Immediate Management

#### **Give Medication sub-cut stat:**

Midazolam 2.5mg OR Haloperidol 2.5mg

#### **Start Pump**

Midazolam 10-20mg/24 hours  
OR  
Haloperidol 5mg/24 hours

#### **Prescribe rescue dose sub-cut hourly:**

Midazolam 2.5-5mg  
And Or  
Haloperidol 2.5mg

### **Planning Ahead**

Prescribe Midazolam 2.5mg or Haloperidol 2.5mg sub-cut hourly if required (prn)

### **Review within 24 hours**

If 2 or more doses needed in 24hrs, and are effective, start syringe pump of the same drug (see left)

If 2 or more doses tried in 24 hours but not effective, switch to the other drug or consider Levomepromazine (see below)

### **Review within 24 hours**

#### **Midazolam**

1-2 extra doses needed increase pump dose by 50%, 3 or more extra doses, double the pump dose. Continue rescue doses of 5mg sub-cut prn

If Midazolam pump dose is >40mg/24hrs Consider Levomepromazine and seek advice

#### **Haloperidol:**

Any extra doses required increase pump dose to 10mg/24hrs and continue rescue doses  
Maximum Haloperidol dose: 20mg/24hrs

Midazolam and Haloperidol are very effective when used in combination

### **Persistent Symptoms**

#### **Levomepromazine:**

This is an effective sedative.

It may be added to Midazolam, if midazolam is partly effective or used to replace Haloperidol.  
Start syringe pump at 25mg/24hrs  
Use Rescue dose 12.5mg sub-cut hourly as needed

**Higher doses are sometimes needed; please discuss with doctor, the Palliative Care Team or Severn Hospice if doses over 50mg/24hrs are used**

**If symptoms persist or you need help contact the Palliative Care Team or Severn Hospice Tel: 01743 236 565**