



Community Services

Patient information and support: syringe pumps

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What is a syringe pump?

A syringe pump is a small battery powered pump. It delivers a continuous flow of medication through a thin tube and a small needleless catheter sitting just beneath the surface of the skin.

Your syringe pump will look like one of these; they are very similar but are either called a T34 or BodyGuard T.



Why do I need a syringe pump?

- If you find it difficult to take medication
- If you are unable to take medicines by mouth
- If medicines taken by mouth are not being absorbed properly

A syringe pump reduces the need for repeated injections.

How does the syringe pump work?

The syringe pump has a battery driven motor which very slowly pushes the syringe plunger which administers the medication via the tube and through the needleless catheter under the skin. You should not feel this as only a tiny amount of fluid is delivered each time the plunger moves.

A green flashing light on the front of the syringe pump lets you know the pump is working correctly.

The nurses will refill the syringe pump each day using the medications which have been prescribed by your doctor and agreed with you.

The machine can be placed into a small bag and can be positioned over your shoulder, or around your waist, so that you can move around while you have the pump in place.

Where does the needleless catheter go?

The needleless catheter / cannula is inserted into the upper arms, thighs, upper chest or tummy. Sometimes it can be placed into your back.

It is held in place by a clear dressing which keeps it clean and dry and allows the nurse to check the site without removing the dressing.



The needleless catheter is designed to be left in place for a number of days. Once in place it should be painless. If you do experience any pain or discomfort, let your nurse know.

Are there any special instructions for me to be aware of?

As with any device, dressing or tubing, always check for signs of pressure damage. Be aware of where lines, tubing and devices are lying and if there are areas where skin contact is made. Regularly check and seek advice if concerned or you notice marks on the skin.

Do not get the syringe pump wet—water and steam can damage the working parts of the pump. Please talk to your nurse if this happens.

Mobile phones may interfere with the syringe pump so we recommend they are not used within one metre of the pump. If you need to use your mobile phone please hold it in the opposite hand from where your pump sits.

What to do if the alarm sounds?

The alarm will sound 15 minutes before the end of the medication. Depending on which syringe pump you have the green flashing light will either turn yellow and beep three times every 15 seconds, or will beep three times every 3-4 minutes with the green light still flashing. If the infusion finishes the light will turn red and there will be a continuous alarm. The nurse will normally visit before this time.

If it does alarm contact the nurse or the out of hours services.

Please do not become concerned. You may like to turn the alarm off until someone arrives, by pressing the green button once. Do not press any other buttons.

When to contact the team

- If your pump alarms
- If your pump becomes damaged
- The green light is not flashing, or the pump is not working
- If the site becomes swollen, red, uncomfortable or painful
- The tubing of the infusion falls out or becomes disconnected

Nursing support

Contact number for your nursing team to support you with your syringe pump

Name:

Tel number:

Out of hours contact number is 111

Notes

Concerns and complaints

We aim to provide you with a high quality service at all times. Share concerns, complaints or comments about your experience with a member of the team or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on freephone 0800 328 7971.

If you would like to have information translated into a different language, please contact the Equality and Diversity Team at: EqualityandInclusion@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

Arabic يُرجى الاتصال بنا إذا كنتم ترغبون في الحصول على المعلومات بلغة أخرى أو بتسقيق مختلف.

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Chinese 若要以其他語言或格式提供這些資訊，請與我們聯繫

Polish Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub w innym formacie, skontaktuj się z nami.

Portuguese Queira contactar-nos se pretender as informações noutra idioma ou num formato diferente.

Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
Trust Headquarters
Littlemore Mental Health Centre
Sandford Road
Littlemore
Oxford
OX4 4XN
Switchboard 01865 901 000
Email enquiries@oxfordhealth.nhs.uk
Website www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk

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