

## HYDROMORPHONE PRESCRIBING

HYDROmorphone is a potent opioid analgesic which is classified as a High Risk Medication. HYDROmorphone is 5 times more potent than morphine and incorrect dosing carries a high risk of adverse patient outcome including death.

**Please adhere to the following guidelines below when prescribing HYDROmorphone**

1. New prescription of HYDROmorphone or recharting of HYDROmorphone for any reason – the medical officer must document the following in the medical record in addition to prescribing on the medication chart:
  - a. Indication, drug, dose, route and for PRN a maximum daily dose (chart this as number of doses to be given e.g. x 3)
  - b. When converting the dose:
    - i. Current drug, dose and route
    - ii. New drug, dose and route
    - iii. The mathematical calculations of how the conversion dose was calculated (use the conversion table attached)
  - c. The medication order must be legible and clear indicating full name of doctor, role and contact number.
  - d. The medical record entry must be checked and countersigned by another doctor. One of the doctors must be a **registrar or above**. A pharmacist can verify the medical record as a second check on the dose **during business hours**.
  - e. When prescribing hydromorphone the generic and tradenames must be written to distinguish between the slow release and immediate release versions. E.g. Hydromorphone slow release – Jurnista; Hydromorphone immediate release – Dilaudid
  - f. The medication chart prescription must also be countersigned by another doctor. If a pharmacist has been the second check, they will verify the dose and they will annotate the medication chart in the pharmacy section to say **'dose verified'**
2. Nursing Staff will not be allowed to administer HYDROmorphone if these requirements are not met. Any concerns will be escalated to the prescribing doctor. If this fails to resolve the issue please escalate to the NUM or AHNM. It will then be escalated to the Consultant Medical Officer to resolve.
3. An Opioid Conversion for Pain Management rule is available on The Sutherland Hospital intranet site with the link below if you require further information.
  - a. [http://seslhnweb/SGSHHS/Business\\_Rules/Clinical/documents/M/Opioid\\_Conversion\\_SGSHHS\\_CLIN100.pdf](http://seslhnweb/SGSHHS/Business_Rules/Clinical/documents/M/Opioid_Conversion_SGSHHS_CLIN100.pdf)
4. If you are unsure of what to do-please contact the Palliative Care Team via Hospital Switchboard within hours, or the On-call Palliative Care Consultant after hours/at weekends via Calvary Switch 95533111.

## Steps to perform conversion to HYDROmorphine

1. Calculate the **total** current narcotic dose required **in 24 hours**
2. Chose route of HYDROmorphine you are going to prescribe
3. Divide or multiply this dose by conversion factor in the table (Dark Blue = divide; Light Blue = multiply). This gives a total dose over 24 hours
4. Divide the 24 hour amount of HYDROmorphine **by 6 to get the 4th hourly dose**

**For example** - patient on 30mg subcutaneous morphine is recharted for subcutaneous HYDROmorphine. To calculate equivalent HYDROmorphine dose using the conversion table below:

1. 30 mg SC morphine is the **total** amount of narcotic being given **over 24 hours**
2. It will be converted to SC hydromorphine
3. Divide the morphine dose by the conversion factor of 5. HYDROmorphine **total dose** will be 6mg **over 24 hours**
4. Divide 6mg by 6 = 1 mg HYDROmorphine **4<sup>th</sup> hourly**

## Narcotic Conversion Table

To From		Codeine	Morphine		Hydromorphone		Oxycodone
		PO Mg/day	PO Mg/day	SC Mg/day	PO Mg/day	SC Mg/day	PO Mg/day
Codeine Mg/day	PO		÷8	÷16	÷40	÷80	÷12
Morphine Mg/day	PO	x8		÷2	÷5	÷10	÷1.5
Morphine Mg/day	SC	x16	x2		÷2	÷5	÷0.6
Hydromorphone Mg/day	PO	x40	x5	x2.5		÷2	÷0.3
Hydromorphone Mg/day	SC	x80	x10	x5	x2		÷0.15
Oxycodone Mg/day	PO	x12	x1.5	x0.6	x0.3	x0.15	

### Multiply

current total daily opioid by conversion factor to get total milligrams per 24hrs

### Divide

current total daily opioid dose by conversion factor, this will give the dose per 24hrs