



# John Taylor Hospice

## Prescribing Algorithm

### Restlessness in the Dying Phase

#### Version 4

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## 1. Scope

This is for use by professionals in all healthcare settings caring for patients experiencing restlessness during the dying phase

## 2. Key points for consideration

- This algorithm should be considered in conjunction with other agreed guidance relating to the care of patients in the dying phase.
- If the patient is not in the dying phase then please consult the West Midlands Guidelines for symptom control in palliative care.
- Before initiating drug treatment, the patient should be assessed for reversible causes of agitation or restlessness, including:
  - Urinary retention.
  - Constipation
  - Pain
  - Drug toxicity e.g., opioids, phenytoin, digoxin.
  - Biochemical abnormalities e.g. Ca, Na.
  - Hypoxia
  - Spiritual distress
- If patients are not settling / comfortable after the given time period then further help can be sought from West Midlands Palliative Care Physicians Guidance <http://wmpcg.co.uk/> alternatively contact the out of hours doctor on call.

### 3. Prescribing Algorithm for Restlessness in the DYING PHASE

