

Administration of Rectal Medicines

Rectal administration of medication is sometimes necessary to best control symptoms. Your Hospice of Southern Kentucky nurse will instruct when this administration is necessary.

To give medications rectally, you need the medication, gloves, and some water-soluble gel such as KY Gel. Please do NOT use Vaseline or Petroleum Jelly. This could keep the medication from working. In some cases, a Macy catheter may be used.

Follow these steps:

- Wash your hands and put on gloves.
- If the medication is a suppository, remove the foil wrapper.
- A pill or capsule can be put directly into the rectum or the medication may first be put into a gelatin capsule and then put into the rectum. (Talk to your nurse about where to get these)
- Put a large daub of gel on the suppository, capsule or pill.
- If possible, position the patient on the left side with their knees pulled to chest.
- Instruct the person to take a few deep breaths and relax as medicine is gently inserted into the rectal opening with a gloved finger.
- Push the medication in as far as it will go and place it against the rectal wall (if the rectum is full of stool, a bowel movement is necessary before the medicine is placed in the rectum).
- There may be the need or sensation to have a bowel movement after the medication is put in the rectum. Hold the medication in for at least 20 minutes so that it can be taken in by the body.
- Take off gloves and wash hands.

Remember:

- The Hospice of Southern Kentucky nurse will train you which medications should be given rectally.
- Report any problems to your nurse.
- Your confidence in giving medications is very important to us. Please ask your Hospice of Southern Kentucky nurse for more information if needed.