

What is a syringe driver?

A syringe driver is a small battery operated syringe pump, similar to the size and weight of a remote control. It is used to give a small amount of medication in the subcutaneous tissue (under the skin) over either 12 or 24 hours. Your nurse will prepare a new syringe and replace it at the end of each 12 or 24 hour period. The medication given in a syringe driver is used to treat pain, nausea, or other symptoms you may be having.



start/boost button

Where do I get the syringe driver?

Your palliative care nurse/doctor team will decide if a syringe driver is right for you. The community or hospital nurse will start the syringe driver once the medication is available.

How do I care for the syringe driver?

The syringe driver is not waterproof so you should not get it wet. When bathing, be careful to keep the syringe driver and butterfly needle site dry.

Do not use the syringe driver within 1 meter (or about 3 1/2 feet) of a cell phone since it can affect how it works.

How do I know the syringe driver is working properly?

You will hear a “whirring noise” from the syringe driver every few minutes. This is normal. You will also see the indicator light flash once every 25 seconds.

What should I do if the light is not flashing?

You will need to change the battery.

How do I change the battery?

To change the battery you need to:

- Slide the plastic cover off the syringe driver
- Slide the battery cover off the back of the syringe driver
- Remove the battery



- Place new 9 volt alkaline battery in the syringe driver
- Replace the cover
- Press the start/boost button on the front of the syringe driver (see picture on page 1) and look for the yellow indicator light to flash (on the front bottom left corner of the driver)

What do I do if the alarm sounds?

- Check to see if the syringe driver is empty. If it is empty, then you may remove the battery.
- If the syringe driver is not empty, then check the line to see if it is kinked. If the line is kinked, then remove the kinks and the alarm will fade after a few seconds. To restart the syringe driver press the start/boost button.
- If the alarm is still sounding, check the subcutaneous butterfly insertion site. If the site is red, hard, swollen or leaking fluid, call your nurse or doctor for advice. You may need a new butterfly site.

How do I stop the syringe driver?

There is no on/off button on the syringe driver. You will need to remove the battery in order to stop the syringe driver. Never remove a syringe with medication remaining from the syringe driver since this may cause the medication to free flow (giving a bigger dose than ordered).

If I have problems with the pump who do I call?

What do I do when I no longer need the pump?

For more information visit the *Cancer Care Nova Scotia* website www.cancercare.ns.ca

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