

Medication Administering

Giving your loved one medication and keeping track of what has been given are two of the most important jobs you will have as a caregiver.

All medications for your loved one will be provided by your hospice care team. For over-the-counter medication, they will provide specific instructions.

Your hospice doctor and nurse will create a plan detailing how much and how often to give medications, as well as go over how to give them.

Your job is to make sure you administer them exactly the way the plan indicates, and track each time you do. This ensures your loved one has the correct dose at the correct time, keeping them comfortable and safe. Use this [Medication Chart \(Download here\)](#) to help you.

If your loved one has side effects from any medication, or the medications do not seem to be having the desired effect, tell your hospice nurse immediately.

While it may feel overwhelming, remember that your hospice care team is here to help. If you have questions or concerns about giving or tracking medication, contact your hospice nurse.

Medications can be given in several different ways and your hospice nurse can show you how best to give them.

1. **By mouth or orally:** Most pills, tablets, and capsules can be swallowed with liquid. Some tablets can also be crushed and placed in soft food, like applesauce. But not all pills can safely be crushed, so ask your hospice nurse before you give medication this way.
2. **By syringe:** Some medicines, such as morphine, must first be drawn into a syringe. Drops from a syringe can be placed under the patient's tongue or inside their cheeks.
3. **By inhalation:** oxygen, as well as other breathing treatments, are inhaled. This usually involves breathing in the medicine by wearing a facemask or tube over the mouth or nose.
4. **By applying to the skin or topically:** many creams and gels are rubbed on to the skin. Always wash your hands and put on gloves before applying a cream medication. Other topical medications may be patches worn on the skin. Remember to apply patches as directed and to look for any skin irritation or rashes under or around them.
5. **If medications cannot be taken orally, they may be given rectally.**