**Common Hospice Medications**

**Morphine Sulfate** (Roxanol, Liquid Morphine, Morphine)
- Morphine sulfate is used to reduce pain and can also be used to minimize shortness of breath.
- It is most effective when taken before pain or shortness of breath become severe.
- Morphine is generally started at the lowest dose and increased if needed to treat symptoms.
- The most common side effects are sedation, mild nausea and constipation. Often times sedation and nausea will resolve after a few days of use as the body becomes accustomed to the medication.
- Because morphine slows the bowel, constipation can be an ongoing problem. Stool softeners are recommended when taking morphine to prevent constipation.
- Liquid morphine and immediate release morphine tablets can be administered under the tongue or in the cheek if the patient cannot swallow (excludes MS Contin or Morphine ER).

**Lorazepam** (Ativan)
- Lorazepam is used to reduce anxiety and/or restlessness. It may also be used for shortness of breath and insomnia.
- It is most effective when taken before symptoms become severe.
- Lorazepam is generally started at the lowest dose and increased if needed to treat symptoms.
- The most common side effect of Lorazepam is sedation.
- Lorazepam tablets can be placed under the tongue or in the cheek if the patient cannot swallow. The tablets can also be dissolved in a small amount of warm water and placed under the tongue or in the cheek.
- It is acceptable to give both Lorazepam and morphine at the same time if needed for comfort.

**Prochlorperazine** (Compazine)
- Prochlorperazine is used to reduce nausea/vomiting.
- Prochlorperazine can be taken as a tablet by mouth or can be administered rectally if a patient is too nauseated to swallow.
- Prochlorperazine is most effective when taken before nausea/vomiting becomes severe.
- The most common side effect of Prochlorperazine is mild sedation.
Atropine Drops
- Atropine drops are used to reduce lung congestion.
- The drops are administered in the mouth or under the tongue.
- The most common side effect of Atropine is dry mouth.
- Providing sips of water or ice chips or swabbing the patient’s mouth can reduce mouth dryness caused by Atropine.

Acetaminophen (Tylenol)
- Acetaminophen is used to reduce discomfort and treat fevers.
- Acetaminophen can be administered in a tablet by mouth or by a suppository rectally.
- Fevers can be uncomfortable for patients and Acetaminophen can be very helpful.
- The maximum daily dose of Acetaminophen is 4,000mg.