

A guide to equivalent doses for opioid drugs for use in palliative care

(Please note the principles below do NOT apply to the management of chronic non-cancer pain)(See also 3Ts Formulary Transdermal Patch Guidelines & 3Ts Guidelines on the Management of Neuropathic Pain)

Note this is to be used as an **approximate guide** to opioid equivalents, because comprehensive data is lacking. Doses always need to be re-titrated after a change of opioid.

Oral Morphine (1 st -line formulary choice)		Subcutaneous morphine		Subcutaneous diamorphine		Oral oxycodone (2 nd - line if morphine not tolerated)			Subcutaneous oxycodone		Fentanyl Transdermal patch Mcg/hr	Buprenorphine Transdermal patch Mcg/hr	Codeine phosphate mg	
Dose ratio to oral morphine		1	1/2		1/3		1/2			1/4		Approximate equivalents	Approximate equivalents	
4 hour dose (mg)	12 MR dose (mg)	24 hour total dose (mg)	4 hour dose (mg)	24 hours total dose (mg)	4 hour dose (mg)	24 hour total dose (mg)	4 hour dose (mg)	12 MR dose (mg)	24 hour total dose (mg)	4 hour dose (mg)	24 hour total dose (mg)	Change 72hourly Stable pain	Stable pain	24 hour dose
		5												60
		10											5 7 days	120
		20											10 7 days	240
5	15	30	2.5	15	1.25	10	2.5	10	15	1.25	7.5	12	20 7days	
10	30	60	5	30	2.5-5	20	5	15	30	2.5	15	25	35 72hours	
15	45	90	7.5	45	5	30	7.5	25	50	3.75	25	37	52.5 72hours	
20	60	120	10	60	7.5	40	10	30	60	5	30	37	70 72 hours	
30	90	180	15	90	10	60	15	45	90	7.5	45	50	105 72 hours	
40	120	240	20	120	12.5	80	20	60	120	10	60	75	140 72 hours	
50	150	300	25	150	15	100	25	75	150	12.5	75	75		
60	180	360	30	180	20	120	30	90	180	15	90	100		
70	210	420	35	210	25	140	35	105	210	17.5	100	125		
80	240	480	40	240	27.5	160	40	120	240	20	120	125		
90	270	540	45	270	30	180	45	135	270	22.5	150	150		

Guide to equivalent doses of weak opioids

Drug	Ratio with oral morphine	Usual dose	Relative oral morphine equivalent dose
Tramadol	10:1	400mg/24hours (max)	40mg/24 hours