

## PEDIATRIC NEUROLOGY INFORMATION SHEET FOR RECTAL PARALDEHYDE ADMINISTRATION

**Note:** Currently this medication is not available in Canada. Your doctor may be able to obtain the medication in special circumstances through the federal Special Access Programme ( SAP) <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/dhp-mps/acces/index-eng.php>  
It is important to know that medications obtained through this program are usually not covered by any drug plan. This means that you will most likely be responsible for paying for the medication yourself.

### PARALDEHYDE USE:

- In special circumstances to manage prolonged seizures within the home care setting when your health care provider has determined that the use of other seizure rescue medications has not been effective.

### HOW PARALDEHYDE WORKS:

- Exact action not known but thought to slow many levels of the central nervous system

### DRUG INFORMATION:

- **ONLY GIVEN RECTALLY**
- Paraldehyde is rapidly absorbed after rectal administration.
- It takes between 4 to 10 hours for about one-half of the drug to be eliminated from the body.
- **Giving partly decomposed paraldehyde is dangerous. If the medication has a brownish color, do not give.**

### SIDE EFFECTS:

- More common: unpleasant breath because partially eliminated through the lungs
- Rare: decreased ability to breath and decreased rate of breathing, decreased blood pressure, skin rash, corrosion of the rectum

### WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE PARALDEHYDE:

- Patients with liver or lung problems should not take paraldehyde since it is primarily broken down by the liver but also partially by the lungs.

**DOSAGE:** The dosage has been calculated out for you based on your child's weight. It is **your** responsibility to let your health care provider know if your child's weight changes.

\_\_\_\_\_ is to be given \_\_\_\_\_ **MLs** of Paraldehyde  
\_\_\_\_\_ as of \_\_\_\_\_. Please be sure to reassess this dose frequently  
with your health care provider. **THIS IS TO BE MIXED WITH AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF  
OLIVE OR MINERAL OIL**

**HOW TO GIVE: Your health care provider should review the following steps with you in detail.**

- An alcohol swab or cloth may be held around the neck of the ampoule when it is snapped off.
- Always snap away from your face to avoid glass shards from getting into you eye(s).
- Draw the prescribed amount into a syringe.
- **IT IS CRUCIAL YOU MIX IT WITH AN EQUAL AMOUNT OF OLIVE OR MINERAL OIL. Never administer the drug undiluted into your child's rectum.**
- Be sure no needle is attached to the syringe before administering into the rectum. **NO sharp object should ever be inserted into the rectum.**
- Attach the feeding tube to the end of the syringe and cut the tube so it is approximately 7 cm (or 3 inches) long. Insert the tubing portion into your child's rectum and instill the medication mixture into the rectum slowly and steadily. It should not take longer than 30 seconds. Hold your child's buttocks together for about 5 minutes if possible.
- Do NOT let the medication sit in the syringe for longer than 15 minutes since the drug will begin to interact with the plastic in the syringe.

**OTHER IMPORTANT FACTS:**

- Please note the time the medication is given and the length of time it took to stop the seizure.
- It is important that you call 911 if your child's seizure lasts greater than five minutes.
- If unsure of the type of emergency care your child needs, call 911.
- If you have given paraldehyde as a last resort to manage your child's prolonged seizures and they are continuing to seize, please go to your nearest hospital's emergency room and seek appropriate medical attention.
- Paraldehyde has a strong odor. Avoid spillage from the ampoule if possible.
- Store ampoules in a cool place protected from light.

Your health care provider's contact number: \_\_\_\_\_