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Northern Health Palliative Care

Fentanyl Patch Use in Palliative Patients

<h3>Indications</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients that are not opioid naïve (opioid therapy at a total daily dose of at least 60 mg/day of oral morphine equivalent and for a minimum duration of 1 to 2 weeks of stable, uninterrupted days of therapy). • Patients with severe and stable pain requiring around-the-clock opioid treatment. • Patients that are not good candidates to receive oral opioid treatment. 	
<h3>Contraindications</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opioid naïve patients, at any dose. • For acute or perioperative pain management (transient, intermittent or short-term pain). • Pain is mild, unstable or poorly controlled • Patients under 18 years of age. • Patients with significant respiratory depression and patients with acute or severe bronchial asthma. 	
<h3>Safety</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevated temperatures may increase fentanyl concentrations; therefore, monitor patients with fevers greater than 38.9 °C. Avoid exposure to heat sources such as hot tubs, saunas or heating pads. • Always prescribe a breakthrough dose using a “breakthrough dose” chart to select the appropriate dose. • Do not cut the patch. • Watch for drug interactions including: increased CNS depressive effects causing risk of sedation and respiratory impairment; altered metabolism by cytochrome P450 3A4; additive serotonergic effects. • Always remove the old patch before applying a new one. • Use cautiously in patients with systemic skin disorders (i.e. scleroderma). 	
<h3>Disposal</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fentanyl patches should be stored in a safe place out of the reach of children. • Used patches still contain some fentanyl so must be kept away from opioid naïve adults, children and/or pets. • Dispose of patch by carefully folding in half to adhere to itself and place in a secure, tamper-proof location (sharps container, large empty vial with child resistant lid). • Caregivers should wear gloves when handling the patch. 	

References:
 Janssen Inc. (2018, February 22). *Product Monograph: Duragesic fentanyl transdermal system*. Retrieved from https://pdf.hres.ca/dpd_pm/00044024.PDF.