

Appendix 1

BREAKTHROUGH OR RESCUE DOSES OF MORPHINE

- ➔ A breakthrough or rescue dose (used interchangeably in the literature) of **morphine** is one that is given when the patient requires **morphine** for symptoms in addition to the regularly prescribed dose
 - ➔ It is used to treat episodic or breakthrough pain which has several types:
 - ➔ Spontaneous pain (unrelated to movement or other incident)
 - ➔ Incident pain (related to an activity, action, or event)
 - ➔ End of dose pain (occurring just prior to the next scheduled dose)
 - ➔ Breakthrough doses of morphine should be available on a PRN or SOS basis **in addition** to the patient's regularly scheduled doses
 - ➔ Providing a breakthrough dose of **morphine** is an important part of managing pain, dyspnoea, and cough
- ➔ Breakthrough doses are generally approximately 10% of the total 24-hour dose and should be ordered every 1-4 hours as needed (PRN or SOS)

Example 1: A patient receives 10 mg q4h Subcutaneous of **morphine** = 60 mg in 24h Subcutaneous. Therefore, the appropriate breakthrough or rescue dose is 5 mg q1h PRN Subcutaneous

Example 2: A patient receives 5 mg q4h PO of **morphine** = 30 mg in 24h PO. Therefore, the appropriate breakthrough or rescue dose is 2.5 mg q4h PRN (Note that 2.5 mg was selected for ease of dosing as most morphine tablets are commonly 5 mg or 10 mg)