

Emergency Rapid Tranquilisation

What is Emergency Rapid Tranquilisation?

This is used when patients are extremely agitated and confused and pose a risk to themselves or others. This is normally only used when all other measures to help calm a person have been exhausted or when the situation is so serious that immediate control is needed to enable emergency treatment or assessment or prevent a person harming themselves or others.

How is Emergency Rapid Tranquilisation performed?

Emergency rapid tranquilisation usually involves the administration of a sedative (to make a person sleepy) medication either directly into their vein or into a muscle to provide a rapid effect. The aim of emergency rapid tranquilisation is to relax and calm a patient or make them 'sleepy' so that emergency assessments and treatment can take place safely and without the need for any form of physical restraint (holding).

Who makes the decision about Emergency Rapid Tranquilisation?

A senior emergency department doctor will have made the decision to undertake emergency rapid tranquilisation; taking into account a person's level of agitation, their need for emergency assessment and treatment as well as the risk the person poses to themselves or others. Patients who require emergency rapid tranquilisation are so unwell that they are not able to make decisions for themselves. The doctor makes the decision that is that they feel is the patient's best interests at that particular time.

Why Would I need Emergency Rapid Tranquilisation?

There are many reasons why a person may experience agitation so severe that emergency rapid tranquilisation is required. These include excessive use of illicit drugs, severe reactions to drugs, head injury, mental health crises, abnormalities of metabolism and some types of infection. The doctor looking after you should be able to give you an indication of the likely cause of your severe agitation but sometimes the results of investigations into the cause take a while to come back.

How will I know that I have received Emergency Rapid Tranquilisation?

Once you have recovered the doctors and nurses looking after you, will let you know if you have had to have emergency rapid tranquilisation. Many of the medications used to provide emergency rapid tranquilisation also cause amnesia (not remembering) so it is not unusual for patients to not fully remember what has happened to them during the emergency rapid tranquilisation process. Most patients recovery quickly and uneventfully following the process. If you have any concerns please ask to speak to a doctor or nurse.

Acknowledgements:

https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/nccmh/reducing-restrictive-practice/resources/rapid-tranquillisation-leaflet.pdf?sfvrsn=f76ceb86_2 Accessed 28.01.2026

If you need further advice, please contact the Emergency Department – details below
Patient Experience

We know that being admitted to hospital can be a difficult and unsettling time for you and your loved ones. If you have any questions or concerns, please do speak with a member of staff on the ward or in the relevant department who will do their best to answer your questions and reassure you.

Feedback

Feedback is really important and useful to us – it can tell us where we are working well and where improvements can be made. There are lots of ways you can share your experience with us including completing our Friends and Family Test – cards are available and can be posted on all wards, departments and clinics at our hospitals. We value your comments and feedback and thank you for taking the time to share this with us.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

If you have any concerns or questions about your care, we advise you to talk with the nurse in charge or the department manager in the first instance as they are best placed to answer any questions or resolve concerns quickly. If the relevant member of staff is unable to help resolve your concern, you can contact the PALS Team. We offer informal help, advice or support about any aspect of hospital services & experiences.

Our PALS team will liaise with the various departments in our hospitals on your behalf, if you feel unable to do so, to resolve your problems and where appropriate refer to outside help. If you are still unhappy you can contact the Complaints Department, who can investigate your concerns. You can make a complaint orally, electronically or in writing and we can advise and guide you through the complaints procedure.

How to contact PALS:

Telephone Patient Services: 0300 123 1732 or via email at: wah-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Opening times:

The PALS telephone lines are open Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 4.00pm. Please be aware that you may need to leave a voicemail message, but we aim to return your call within one working day.

If you are unable to understand this leaflet, please communicate with a member of staff.

For additional medical advice, if your symptoms or condition worsens:

Contact your GP

NHS 111:

Get help with your symptoms, NHS111:
Information to help you manage your health:

Telephone 111

<https://111.nhs.uk/>
www.nhs.uk

In an emergency telephone 999

Emergency Department (A&E)
Alexandra Hospital
Woodrow Drive
Redditch B98 7UB

Tel: 01527 512030

Minor Injury Unit
Kidderminster Hospital
Bewdley Road
Kidderminster DY11 6RJ

Tel: 01562 513039

Emergency Department (A&E)
Worcestershire Royal Hospital
Charles Hastings Way
Worcester WR5 1DD

Tel: 01905 760743