

# The BD BodyguardT and McKinley T34 Syringe Pump – a guide for patients and carers

## What is a syringe pump?

A syringe pump is a small battery pump with a syringe that has your medicines in it. The medicines are given through a cannula which is put into the fatty layer under the skin and are then absorbed into your body. The pump will deliver your medicine slowly over 24 hours. The pump can be used to give you a combination of medicines.

## Why do I need a syringe pump?

You may need a syringe pump because you have been feeling sick or have been sick and find it hard to keep your medicines down. Medicines to stop you being sick can be given by the pump at the same time as other medicines to help with things such as pain. Once you have stopped being sick you might be able to go back to swallowing medicines.

You may need a syringe pump because you cannot swallow or absorb medicines given by mouth. The pump gives you the medicines you need in a different way and means that you do not need a lot of injections.

## Living with your syringe pump

A nurse will check regularly to see how you are. The nurse will check the pump and also check that the skin around the cannula is not red, swollen or sore. If you are at home the nurse will carry out the checks when they visit. You or the person who looks after you may be asked if either of you would like to do the checks. The nurse will tell you exactly what to do.

A nurse will put new medicine(s) into the syringe every 24 hours.

Sometimes you may need to take some other medicines even though you have a pump. If you are at home and you are able to swallow medicines, make sure you have enough tablets, capsules, or liquids to take should you need to take them for pain, sickness, or anxiety. Let the nurse know if you have had to take any medicines that are not in your pump.

You should keep the pump and the cannula site dry. If you drop the pump into water, you must contact the nurse as soon as possible, as you will need a new syringe pump.

You should not let the syringe be exposed to direct sunlight.

You should not put the pump near anything hot, like a heat pad, electric blanket or hot water bottle.

You can go out and about with the pump, as it is small enough to be put into a pouch that can be worn as a shoulder bag.

If you drive you should ask the nurse if the medicines in the pump will affect your driving.

Try to keep mobile phones that are switched on about an arm's length away, as they may affect the way the pump works.

### **How do I know that my syringe pump is working?**

The light above the 'ON/OFF' button flashes green every 64 seconds. If it turns red, there is a problem with the pump, and you should contact the nurse as soon as possible.

Your nurse will discuss with you what to do if the alarm sounds.

**If any of the following happen you must let the nurse know as soon as possible:**

- Pump gets wet
- Pump is dropped
- Colour of the medicines in the tubing or syringe has changed
- Cloudiness or bits in the tubing or the syringe
- Skin around the cannula is red, swollen, or sore
- Liquid leaks where the cannula goes into the skin
- Cannula has fallen out
- Tubing is not connected to the cannula
- Alarm sounds.

**If you are at home, phone the community nurse or the Out of Hours Service as soon as possible.**

**Useful contact details:**

**Community Nurse:**

**Out-Of-Hours Service:**

**GP:**

**Other:**