

You (or your loved one) are taking the liquid form of a medication called morphine (brand name Roxanol®). Morphine is an opioid pain medicine. It may also be used for shortness of breath.

Morphine liquid can be swallowed or can be placed under the tongue if you (or your loved one) are unable to swallow. This medication may be included in a “kit” with other medications to use as needed to help treat new or worsening symptoms. Make sure to follow the hospice team’s instructions carefully when using morphine. As with all medications, don’t take extra doses or larger doses without first talking to the hospice team.

## Possible side effects of morphine:

Seek emergency medical help if you or your loved one have any of the following signs of a severe allergic reaction:

- Swelling of the face, lips, tongue, or throat
- Hives (red, raised, itchy skin)
- Difficulty breathing

Contact the hospice team if you (or your loved one) experience one or more of these serious side effects:

- Sleep apnea (breathing stops for long periods of time when sleeping)
- Severe fatigue, severe dizziness, fainting
- Chest pain, fast heartbeat
- Confusion, seizures
- Severe abdominal pain, severe constipation
- Swelling of arms/legs, chills, sore throat
- Painful or trouble with urination
- Depression, mood changes
- Burning/numbness feeling
- Not able to move, trouble controlling body movements, muscle spasms

Potential less serious side effects of morphine may include:

- Loss of strength and energy
- Dry mouth
- Nausea/vomiting
- Constipation
- Headache, anxiety
- Sweating more than usual
- Diarrhea
- Lack of appetite

## Other things to be aware of when using morphine:

- Constipation is a common side effect of morphine. The hospice team may prescribe you (or your loved one) a laxative to help with this.
- Morphine may cause drowsiness, which may impair physical or mental abilities. You (or your loved one) should use caution when performing activities that require being alert (for example: driving or operating equipment).
- Avoid drinking alcohol with morphine as it can increase the risk of side effects.
- Contact the hospice team if your (or your loved one’s) symptoms do not improve or get worse.

Reference: *Clinical Pharmacology* last accessed 1.26.24