

reducing the feelings of breathlessness.

- Lorazepam to help with your breathlessness. Lorazepam is usually used for the treatment of anxiety, but it has also been shown to be effective in reducing the feeling of breathlessness
- Medroxyprogesterone or Megestrol to help improve your appetite. These are hormones used in the treatment of some cancers, but they have also been shown to improve the appetite and so help you gain weight

Keep this box for notes or questions you want to ask.

## *Information on your medicines*

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### *for St Christopher's at Home Patients*



St Christopher's Hospice

August 2001

*This leaflet contains further information on your medicines*

Information on your medicines – for St Christopher's at Home patients

When you receive your medicines from your pharmacy, you should find that each container is labelled with the instructions on how and when to take the medicine plus any extra warnings, for example 'Take with or after food'.

Many medicines are now supplied with a 'Patient Information Leaflet'. This can provide a great deal of information about the medicine, its uses and its side effects. However, most medicines have more than one effect on the body and for many years, palliative care (hospice) doctors have found that certain medicines are safe and effective for the treatment of symptoms *other* than those specified by the medicine's manufacturer. There is now plenty of written information to confirm this. In such cases, you may find the information that you have been given from the hospice does not agree with the printed information on the 'Patient Information Leaflet'. Your pharmacist

may not be aware of the reason your medicines have been prescribed as this information is not provided on the prescription. This could cause you and your family or carers anxiety and confusion and for this reason, we are providing you with this extra information.

You can find information on medicines used in Palliative Care in specialist Palliative Care textbooks and your doctor, nurse and pharmacist can obtain information on a website – [www.palliativedrugs.org](http://www.palliativedrugs.org)

If you have any further questions or would like more details, please ask one of the following people:

*St Christopher's Homecare nurses*  
020 8776 5656  
*Hospice Pharmacist*  
020 8768 4580

*Community Pharmacist*  
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*District Nurse*  
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You have been prescribed one or more of the following medicines:

- Haloperidol to treat nausea and/or vomiting. This medicine is regularly prescribed in higher doses for patients with psychiatric symptoms, however, at low doses it has been shown also to be very effective at relieving nausea and vomiting
- Carbamazepine or sodium valproate to treat nerve pain. These medicines are regularly prescribed for patients with epilepsy, however, they are also effective for many patients for the relief of nerve pain.
- Amitriptyline to treat nerve pain. This medicine is regularly prescribed at higher doses for patients suffering with depression, however, at lower doses, it has been shown to be effective in the relief of nerve pain.
- Oramorph liquid to help with your breathlessness. Oramorph liquid contains morphine and is normally used to treat pain, but it has also been shown to be effective in