ST. FRANCIS 24/7 CALL CENTER: (321) 269-424

St. Francis REFLECTIONS℠ Lifestage Care
Established 1977 • Licensed 1990

Medication Management

Tips for helping with Medication Management:

- **Medication Schedule:** Keeping a consistent medication schedule helps manage symptoms effectively. A medication log can help caregivers track what was given and when. Utilization of pill organizers or setting alarms for reminders can help. It's crucial to follow the care team's instructions and not to change dosages or schedules without consulting them.
    - **Scheduled Medications:** These medications should be given at specific time to maintain consistent levels in the bloodstream. **Do not skip scheduled doses, even if the patient feels "better" to prevent symptoms from returning.**
    - **As Needed Medications (PRN Medication):** As needed medications are used to provide symptom management when scheduled medications are not effective. As needed medications can be given based on the ordered frequency (i.e. every 4 hours). **Maintain a medication log to write down time and reason for giving PRN medication to track effectiveness.**
- **Understanding Medications:** Learn the names, purposes, dosages, and side effects of each medication. Having this knowledge helps in recognizing side effects or adverse reactions early. If unsure, ask the hospice team for clarification.
- **Administering Medications:** Different medications require different administration techniques. Make sure you understand how to administer the medications, if you have questions or don't understand ask the care team for assistance.

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- **General Tips for Medication Administration:** (Please follow instructions provided by care team)
  - **Oral Medications:**
    - If tolerated, administer with a full glass of water.
    - **If experiencing difficulty swallowing:** Tablets can be crushed (if approved by hospice team) and administered in small amount of applesauce or pudding.
  - **Liquid Medications:**
    - Using a dosing cup or syringe, ensure accuracy of measurement with ordered dose.
    - Gently administer liquid, avoid choking by giving small amounts at a time.
  - **Topical Medications:** (Creams, lotions, ointments, patches)
    - Use gloves if necessary to prevent absorption through the skin.
    - Rotating application sites to prevent skin irritation.
  - **Injections:**
    - Always follow care team instructions regarding drawing up medications, choosing injection sites, and safe administration.
    - Rotate sites to prevent skin irritation and discomfort.
    - **Always dispose of needles in approved sharps container (i.e. puncture resistant container). Never throw needles in the trash.**

- **Safe Storage:** Medications should be stored in a cool, dry place away from children and pets. It's important to keep medications in their original containers with labels intact (unless organizing into pill planner). Expired or discontinued medications should be disposed of according to local regulations or hospice guidelines.

Notify the hospice nurse or physician about any changes in symptoms or concerns about medication effectiveness or side effects.

St. Francis Reflections is always available to assist with any questions or concerns 24/7

321-269-4240