

# Step-by-Step Instructions for Taking Life-Ending Medications

Note: If these directions are not followed the process may take longer, or not work.

## 1. 12 hours prior to taking the medications:

Discontinue regular medicines, except those for pain or comfort. Do not take laxatives or stomach-coating medications like Maalox, Pepto-Bismol, or Carafate (sucralfate).

## 2. 5 hours prior to taking the medications:

- Do not eat any food.
- Drink only water or clear juice (that you can read the newspaper through) during this period; no carbonated beverages, no dairy products. Coffee is okay if it is black or sweetened with sugar only.

## 3. 1 hour prior to taking the medications:

Take the anti-nausea medications: 2 mg of Haldol (haloperidol) OR 8 mg of Zofran (ondansetron) AND 20 mg of Reglan (metoclopramide)

**4. Mix and Consume the lethal medication (DDMAPh, DDMA, and DDMP2):** NOTE: Consume these medications while comfortably situated. These medications can cause someone to fall asleep very quickly. Just prior to swallowing the lethal medication, mix the medications to make a smooth, non-clumpy solution by using 2-4 oz. of water, OR 2-4 oz. of clear juice or Gatorade. *Room temperature (versus out of the fridge) may help dissolve the medications better.*

1. Pour the selected liquid into the bottle of powder.
2. Recap the bottle securely and shake vigorously for at least 30 seconds.
3. Pour the liquid medication into a glass and drink immediately (straw optional).
4. Drink all of the liquid medication within 1-2 minutes. The medicine will taste bitter and may cause a burning sensation. After swallowing the life-ending medication, you may follow with water, clear juice, a popsicle, sorbet, or an alcoholic beverage, if desired. Avoid carbonation and dairy.

NOTE: *For those who have a neuromuscular problem and have been taking all meds mixed into soft food* such as applesauce, mix the powdered life-ending medication into 1-2 ounces of the soft food you normally use to be able to swallow your medications. Please note that mixing the medication with soft food will likely result in a longer time to death.

**Keep the dying person in an upright position for at least 20 minutes**, to reduce the risk of regurgitation (even after the person loses consciousness). After 20 minutes they can be lowered to a semi-upright or flat position. Turning the individual onto their right side is optional and may lessen snoring or gurgling. If caregivers are unable to reposition the person for any reason, leave the patient in a seated position.

**Loss of consciousness occurs within 3 to 15 minutes**, in most cases. The time to death after taking the medication varies depending on the person. In rare instances, time to death may extend many hours; and even more than a day. Regardless of length, the medication will be effective, and the dying person will remain unconscious throughout.

Once the patient has fallen asleep and is unarousable, **supplemental oxygen** should be turned off.

**Write down the following information**, which the attending (prescribing) physician will need in order to complete the required paperwork for the Department of Health. Please pass this information on to your Volunteer Client Adviser or the prescribing physician.

Time anti-nausea medications were taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Time life-ending medicine was taken: \_\_\_\_\_

Time the person lost consciousness: \_\_\_\_\_

Presumed time of death: \_\_\_\_\_