What Is The ‘Just-in-case’ (JIC) Box and What Is In It?

The Just-in-case (JIC) box is a box containing medicines which, among other things, are very effective in treating pain and sickness when administered into the skin via a needle and a special pump (syringe-driver).

It has been offered to you by your GP or nurse to ensure that, should you have symptoms which are not treatable by oral medicines at any time in the next few weeks, your nursing team/GP will be able to treat you quickly and effectively. Most patients find this reassuring.

The JIC box is not to be used instead of your usual medicines but is kept as an immediately available back-up when you are unable to take medicines by mouth. It will be especially helpful should you need any of these drugs in the evenings or at weekends. The JIC box contains the following medicines (your GP may have decided to make individualised changes to this list):

1. DIAMORPHINE: for severe pain.
2. CYCLIZINE: for sickness.
3. MIDAZOLAM: for relaxing muscle.
4. HYOSCINE or GLYCOPPYRRONIUM: to dry up secretions from the mouth/chest.
5. HALOPERIDOL: for anxiousness.
6. WATER: to dissolve the other medicines.

The JIC box will be obtained from an approved pharmacy (a list of these will be provided by your surgery when you pick up your prescription for the JIC box), or dispensing doctor where applicable.

The JIC box will be sealed with a tamper-evident label; please do not break this seal – the box is only to be accessed and opened by the team of medical professionals who are looking after you. They will also make sure that the medicines are accounted for and used appropriately.

Your GP/nurse will discuss the use of the JIC box with you when they prescribe it. You will then take this prescription to the approved pharmacy/dispensary so that it can be made up and packed into the JIC box.

When the JIC box is no longer required or the medicines have gone out of date, any remaining medicines should be returned to the dispensing pharmacy (or any other pharmacy if this is not practical).
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **When will I be given the JIC box?**
The JIC box will be prescribed for you when you and your GP/nurse feel it would be useful to have the reassurance of effective emergency medication at home which are available in the ‘out of hours’ period such as evenings and weekends.

2. **Does the JIC box mean I am going to need these drugs immediately?**
No. The JIC box is just back-up and may not be used for many weeks, if at all.

3. **Do I take it into hospital / hospice with me?**
No. Leave the JIC box at home but take your regular oral medicines. If you go to hospital, they will provide any treatment you require.

4. **Who will know when to use the JIC box?**
The JIC box will only be opened and used by the nursing team or emergency doctor. This will usually only be done when they set up a syringe-driver and only after talking to you.

5. **Where should I keep the JIC box?**
The JIC box should be kept in a safe place and away from children. The seal should not be opened by anyone except your nursing team or the emergency doctor.

6. **What happens to the JIC box when it is not needed?**
Any remaining medicines must be returned to the pharmacy/dispensary that provided it (or another pharmacy if this is not practical). The cardboard box can be disposed of in your normal waste / recycling.

7. **Who do I talk to if I have any questions about the JIC box?**
You can talk to your Community Nurse, Macmillan Nurse, Hospice Nurse, Pharmacist/Dispenser or GP.