



ADULT Medication Monograph

# Fentanyl (Topical and Oral)

This document should be read in conjunction with this [DISCLAIMER](#)

[Formulary: Restricted](#)



 **HIGH RISK Medication**

<b>Class</b>	Opioid analgesic
<b>Presentation</b>	<p><b>Sublingual tablet (Abstral®):</b> 100 microg</p> <p><b>Lozenge (Actiq®):</b> 200 microg</p> <p><b>Transdermal Patch:</b> 12 microg/hour, 25 microg/hour, 50 microg/hour, 75 microg/hour, 100 microg/hour</p>
<b>Storage</b>	<p>Store at room temperature, below 25°C</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Schedule 8 Medication</b></p>
<b>Dose</b>	<p>Doses will vary widely depending on the indication and previous analgesic requirements. Titrate dose according to response and sedation score.</p> <p><b>Sedation score</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>0 – wide awake</li> <li>1 – easy to rouse</li> <li>2 – easy to rouse, but cannot stay awake</li> <li>3 – difficult to rouse.</li> </ul> <p>Aim to keep the sedation score &lt;2; a score of 2 represents early respiratory depression</p> <p><b><u>Breakthrough pain in chronic cancer pain</u></b></p> <p><i>Patients may only take if stabilised for &gt;7 days on opioid therapy equivalent to at least 60mg oral morphine daily for cancer pain.</i></p> <p><b><u>Sublingual and buccal formulations are NOT interchangeable</u></b></p> <p><b>Sublingual (Abstral®):</b></p> <p>100microg tablet, when required for breakthrough pain relief.</p> <p>If this is inadequate after 30 minutes give another 100microg tablet, consider increasing the tablet strength for the first dose in the next episode of breakthrough pain. Maximum 800microg per episode.</p>

	<p>Maximum of 2 doses per episode and no more than 800microg per episode. Wait at least 2 hours per treatment episode. No more than 4 treatment episodes in 24 hours.</p> <p><b>Buccal (Actiq®):</b> 200microg lozenge when required for breakthrough pain relief. If this is inadequate 30 minutes after starting lozenge, give another 200microg lozenge.</p> <p>Consider increasing the tablet strength for the first dose in the next episode of breakthrough pain. Maximum 1600microg per episode.</p> <p>If &gt;4 breakthrough episodes for 4 consecutive days or 2 doses are needed to treat consecutive episodes, adjust the regular opioid</p> <p><b><u>Chronic pain</u></b></p> <p><i>Do not use fentanyl patch in opioid-naïve patients</i></p> <p><b>Topical:</b></p> <p>Base dose on previous 24 hour opioid requirement, calculating equivalent 24 hour fentanyl dose if necessary.</p> <p>Use ONE patch every 3 days. Adjust dose according to response. Use no more frequently than every 3 days if analgesia is insufficient.</p>
<b>Administration</b>	<p><b><u>Sublingual (Abstral®)</u></b></p> <p>Place tablet under the tongue and keep in place until dissolved. Do not chew, suck or swallow the tablet.</p> <p>If you have a dry mouth, moisten with water before using the tablet.</p> <p><b><u>Lozenge (Actiq®)</u></b></p> <p>Place lozenge in the mouth against the cheek and move it around the mouth using the applicator. Let it dissolve over 15 minutes. Do not chew the lozenge.</p> <p>If you have a dry mouth, moisten with water before using the lozenge.</p> <p><b><u>Patch</u></b></p> <p>Write the date and time of application on the patch with a permanent marker then apply to dry, non-irritated, hairless and cool skin on upper torso. Remove after 3 days and put a new patch on a different area (avoid re-using the same area for at least 3 weeks)</p> <p>Heat increases the release of fentanyl from patch; avoid exposure to external heat sources (including electric blankets, heat pads, heat lamps, saunas, hot baths)</p> <p>Do not cut or divide patches as this may affect drug release characteristics</p>
<b>Pregnancy</b>	<p><b>1st Trimester:</b> Considered safe to use</p> <p><b>2nd Trimester:</b> Considered safe to use</p> <p><b>3rd Trimester:</b> Considered safe to use</p>

<b>Breastfeeding</b>	Considered safe to use
<b>Precautions</b>	Patch not to be used for acute or post-operative pain
<b>Monitoring</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pain score and frequency of breakthrough pain relief use</li> <li>• Sedation score and respiratory rate</li> <li>• Dependence and tolerance</li> </ul> <p><b>Transdermal Patch:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Patch takes about 24–72 hours to reach maximum effect; steady state concentration may not be reached until the second patch is applied; wean other analgesics slowly after first patch is applied</li> <li>• Patch is generally effective for 72 hours; however, adult patients with pain that regularly occurs before the next dose is due may sometimes need to apply a new patch every 48 hours</li> </ul> <p><b>Lozenge:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take particular care to ensure good dental hygiene as the lozenge contains sugar</li> </ul>
<b>Clinical Guidelines and Policies</b>	<p><b>HDWA Policies:</b>  <a href="#">Schedule 8 Medicines Prescribing Code</a>  <a href="#">Using the opioid conversion guide</a></p> <p><b>FormularyOne:</b>  <a href="#">Formulary One - Fentanyl</a></p> <p><b>WNHS Policies:</b>  <a href="#">High Risk Medicines</a></p> <p><b>KEMH Clinical Guidelines:</b>  <a href="#">Postoperative management: Anaesthetics</a>  <a href="#">Labour and Postoperative analgesia</a>  <a href="#">Post-Operative IV Analgesia Flowchart</a>  <a href="#">Palliative Care</a></p> <p><b>KEMH Pharmaceutical &amp; Medicines Management Guidelines:</b>  KEMH Pharmaceutical &amp; Medicines Management Guideline: <a href="#">Medication Administration</a></p>
<b>References</b>	<p>Australian Medicines Handbook. Fentanyl. In: Australian Medicines Handbook [Internet]. Adelaide (South Australia): Australian Medicines Handbook; 2020 [cited 2020 Feb 20]. Available from: <a href="https://amhonline.amh.net.au/">https://amhonline.amh.net.au/</a></p> <p>Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia. Fentanyl. In: Australian</p>

	<p>Injectable Drugs Handbook; 2020 [cited 2020 Feb 20]. Available from: <a href="http://aidh.hcn.com.au">http://aidh.hcn.com.au</a></p> <p>The Royal Women's Hospital. Fentanyl. In: Pregnancy and Breastfeeding Medicines Guide [Internet]. Parkville (Victoria): The Royal Women's Hospital; 2018 [cited 2020 Feb 20]. Available from: <a href="https://thewomenspbmg.org.au/">https://thewomenspbmg.org.au/</a></p> <p>MIMS Australia. Fentanyl. In: MIMS Online [Internet]. St Leonards (New South Wales): MIMS Australia; 2018 [cited 2020 Feb 20]. Available from: <a href="https://www.mimsonline.com.au">https://www.mimsonline.com.au</a></p>
--	--

Keywords:	Fentanyl, chronic pain, breakthrough pain, palliative care, abstral, actiq, durogesic		
Publishing:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Intranet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Internet		
Document owner:	Chief Pharmacist		
Author / Reviewer:	Pharmacy Department		
Date first issued:	Apr 2015	Version:	4.0
Last reviewed:	March 2020	Next review date:	March 2023
Endorsed by:	Medicines and Therapeutics Committee	Date:	March 2020
Standards Applicable:	NSQHS Standards: 1  Governance, 4  Medication Safety		
<p><b>Printed or personally saved electronic copies of this document are considered uncontrolled.</b></p> <p><b>Access the current version from the WNHS website.</b></p> <p><b>For any enquiries relating to this guideline, please email <a href="mailto:KEMH.PharmacyAdmin@health.wa.gov.au">KEMH.PharmacyAdmin@health.wa.gov.au</a></b></p>			

© Department of Health Western Australia 2020