

# American Clinicians Academy on Medical Aid in Dying

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## Recommended Aid-in-Dying Pharmacology

Updated: April 16, 2024

Reminder: Please review the Academy's Red Flag Checklist for Potentially Complicated or Prolonged Aid-in-Dying Deaths before prescribing aid-in-dying medications.

***The Academy now recommends one single protocol for all patients: DDMAPh.***

NOTE: All medications must be obtained by the pharmacist in powder form, not from crushed tablets or opened capsules.

Prescriptions and instructions are written as:

**Pre-medications** to prevent nausea/vomiting:

Ondansetron 8mg tab, #1; Metoclopramide 20mg (10mg tabs, #2)

Sig: Take all three pills at least 30 to 60 minutes before taking aid-in-dying medications.

**Aid-in-Dying Medications** (DDMAPh) 30 to 60 minutes after pre-medications.

Digoxin 100mg;

Diazepam 1gm;

Morphine 15gms;

Amitriptyline 8gm; Phenobarbital

5gm.

Dispense as powder.

*Sig: Mix the powdered medications with two ounces of water or clear apple juice. Once you start taking the medication, complete taking it all within two minutes so that you do not fall asleep partially through the dose. (See this video for detailed mixing instructions:*

<https://vimeo.com/546241500>. Note: The volume in the video is 4 ounces, the newer recommendation is 2 ounces).

Written mixing instructions: Do not pour the powder out of the bottle. Add two ounces of clear (not unfiltered) apple juice (or water) to the bottle and shake vigorously until the powders are fully suspended. Pour the medications into a drinking glass (or the patient can drink straight from the bottle, or use a straw). If settling occurs before drinking, stir the liquid so that the powders are again suspended.

NOTE: To decrease the bitter taste and potential burning sensation of the medications, take teaspoonfuls of cold sorbet (not ice cream) or suck on a popsicle before and after taking the medications. If burning occurs, continued spoonful of sorbet or sucking on a popsicle will help significantly until sleep comes on within 3 to 10 minutes.