Don’t Rush To Crush

MIMS Online now provides guidance to therapeutic options for people unable to take solid oral medicines.

MIMS Online offers “Don’t Rush to Crush” as an optional content module for CAUL libraries that provides Australia’s most comprehensive guide to administering solid oral medicines to patients who are unable to swallow. The “Don’t Rush to Crush” guidance is produced and maintained by The Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia (SHPA), the professional body which represents around 3,000 pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and associates practicing in all parts of the Australian health system.
Don’t Rush To Crush

Summary

The foundation treatment for most medical conditions is the taking of medications. With the population aging, medications will be the foremost aid in providing quality of life and longevity. The method of medicines administration will to some extent determine the gained therapeutic value; it may also determine whether any adverse effect is experienced.

The administration of medicines is perhaps the most common clinical procedure that a nurse undertakes. However, this task is often complicated when patients become non-compliant with their medication due to problems swallowing. This problem is frequent; swallowing difficulties are common with 60% of aged care residents and 40% of the general population finding it difficult to swallow their daily medications.

When a tablet or capsule cannot be swallowed, an obvious solution might be to crush the tablet or open the capsule and add the medication to food or drink. However, many tablets and capsules are not designed to be crushed or opened. Changing the form of the medication may see it become toxic to the patient or reduce the safety or efficacy.

For example, crushing an extended release drug can destroy the medication time release properties with the whole dose being released within a few minutes rather than the intended 12 or 24 hours.

With the need for clear, professional advice regarding the suitability of crushing a medicine, the Society of Hospital Pharmacists of Australia published “Don’t Rush to Crush” which is now available as additional optional content within MIMS Online.
Intuitive and rapid access to information on the suitability of a medication to be crushed or dispersed

The MIMS Online “Don’t Rush to Crush” content provides monographs for over 500 Australian medicines listing generic names, brand names and available forms and strengths. There are separate recommendations for administering solid oral dose forms to patients with swallowing difficulties and patients with enteral feeding tubes. The information is delivered for appropriate medications in a tabbed window only one click away from the full product information, abbreviated information and consumer medicine information. The use of quick guide symbols in the “Don’t Rush to Crush” monographs provides intuitive and rapid guidance and access to information of the suitability of a medication to be crushed or dispersed. In the case where a medication is unsuitable for crushing this is clearly indicated.

Indicates a proprietary oral liquid

Indicates a tablet, capsule or granules that may be dispersed

Indicates a tablet or capsule contents that may be crushed using a mortar and pestle or tablet crushing device

Indicates a tablet, capsule contents or granules that should not be crushed

Indicates a medicine that may be hazardous and precautions should be taken if dispersing or crushing

Indicates a medicine that is cytotoxic and special handling precautions are required

The “Don’t Rush to Crush” content delivered within MIMS Online ensures that advice needed for patients receive their medicines in a manner that is safe and maintains the efficacy of the medicine is always on hard at the point of care or medication preparation.

The information provides assistance to all Australian health environments including hospitals, rehabilitation services, and clinics.
Quality information with a robust Editorial Process

A multidisciplinary approach is important to achieving positive medication outcomes for consumers. To best meet this need the team producing the “Don’t Rush to Crush” content includes health professionals and clinicians from a variety of disciplines including pharmacists, dietician, nurse and allied health professionals. A rigorous content review ensures that the guidance is evidence based and facilitates unbiased decision making according to current standards of care.

The content is managed by a team of two Pharmacist Editors. The Editors are assisted by a Monograph Editorial Committee who are responsible for the content of the monographs, Introduction Subcommittee responsible for the additional guidance and content beyond the monographs, and a team of pharmacist monograph reviewers.

In all, over forty five clinicians and health professionals review and maintain the content. The contributors are primarily members of the Society of Hospital Pharmacists currently practicing in the public health sector in Australia.

Several pharmaceutical companies have also provided information included in individual drug monographs. This information has been provided on the understanding that these companies do not advocate the off-label use of products manufactured and produced by them. Information provided by these companies can be found in the monograph references as ‘personal communication’.
Integration of Don’t Rush to Crush Content into MIMS Online

“Don't Rush to Crush” content is seamlessly integrated into MIMS Online and is retrieved via the standard search methods that are used for navigating to product or consumer information. Searching for a product by brand name, generic or ingredient name, therapeutic class or action / indication will lead the user to a number of tabbed windows that display information about the medication. Typically in MIMS Online the available tabs are Abbreviated Product Information, Full Product Information and Consumer Medicines Information.

When "Don't Rush to Crush” content is available an additional tab which contains the DRTC advice and guidance. This information is always only one mouse click away from the standard MIMS information, but remains clearly separated to avoid confusing the content with the official MIMS product information.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Brand names</th>
<th>Available strengths</th>
<th>Quick guide</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral liquid</td>
<td>Serenade</td>
<td>2 mg/mL</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tablet</td>
<td>Serenade</td>
<td>0.8 mg, 1.5 mg, 5 mg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Drug class: Dopamine antagonist/antipsychotic
Dose alterations: No dose change is required when switching between oral liquid and tablets

Warnings:
Stopping antipsychotic medicines may cause a discontinuation (withdrawal) syndrome. This may be avoided by gradual dose reduction. Contact the prescriber if required.
May cause dry mouth or excessive salivation. See section 3.4

Other:

Oral liquid

Give oral liquid
- There is no information regarding jejunal administration. Monitor for increased side effects or loss of efficacy

Swallowing difficulties

Give oral liquid
- See section 7.2 if there is an aspiration risk

Tablets

Enteral feeding tube

Use Method B – tablets are slow to disperse
- There is no information regarding jejunal administration. Monitor for increased side effects or loss of efficacy

Swallowing difficulties

Use Method E – tablets are slow to disperse
- See section 7.2 if there is an aspiration risk

Preferred course of action
1. Give oral liquid
2. Crush tablet (Method B or E)
3. Injection available. Contact the prescriber to consider parenteral use if appropriate

*Check PBA availability where formulation or medicine changes are being considered (www.pba.gov.au)

References:
1. MIMS online, Australia. MHRA, USP Medical, 2010. Accessed 27/09/10

FIG 3 - Example DRTC Monograph for a medication SUITABLE for crushing
Typical Navigation of Don’t Rush to Crush - Search

The “Don’t Rush to Crush” information is fully accessible within MIMS Online by following standard MIMS Online searching and information navigation flows. Searching for either a generic or branded medication will display a “SHPA (Society of Hospital Pharmacists)” link if “Don’t Rush to Crush” content is available. In the example below the “Diltiazem Hydrochloride” has been entered in the MIMS Online Simple Search. The resulting display indicates relevant branded medications and the ability to view “Don’t Rush to Crush” information with one single click.
Don’t Rush to Crush – Monograph Display

The “Don’t Rush to Crush” monograph is displayed within a Tabbed Content Pane when the SHPA link is selected from any MIMS Online search result. To ensure the end-user does not confuse the medication crushing advice medication product information or the consumer medicines information sheet the “Don’t Rush to Crush” content is separated into a dedicated tab pane. The monograph is identical to the relevant page displayed in the printed “Don’t Rush to Crush” publication provided by the SHPA. Conveniently the associated product information and consumer information for the medication is only one mouse click away.

FIG 4 - Example DRTC MIMS Online Monograph Display