Rapid tranquilisation is the use of medicine to quickly calm somebody who is extremely distressed and is at risk of harm to themselves, or possibly those around them.

What is rapid tranquilisation?

Types of rapid tranquilisation

There are two routes to take rapid tranquilisation.

1. Staff will first offer someone medicine in tablet form that can be swallowed.
2. If someone does not like tablets, or refuses tablets, and are putting their or others safety at risk then medication can be given via an injection into their muscle—usually around the hip area.

Why would someone need to be given rapid tranquilisation?

When someone is very scared or distressed they can sometimes pose a risk to themselves, or to those around them.

When some people are upset they deliberately hurt themselves and we want keep them safe.

Do I have a choice?

You can make an advanced agreement about how you would prefer to be treated should a situation arise where you may require rapid tranquilisation - for example you can request not to be given certain medicines. Unfortunately although staff use rapid tranquilisation as the last possible option it may be your wishes have to be overridden in order to keep you, and others, safe.

What happens after rapid tranquilisation?

The staff will request to take physical observations like blood pressure and pulse. This will happen for every 15 minutes for the 1st hour, then hourly for 2 hours or until the person becomes active and there are no further concerns.

The staff will inform the doctor about the incident.

When the situation has calmed down and the person is able, staff will ask to discuss what led to the person needing rapid tranquilisation.

Central and North West London
NHS Foundation Trust

What you need to know about: Rapid Tranquilisation

Giving us Feedback

If you want to give feedback (comments, compliments, concerns or complaints) about the service that you, or someone you care for, have received, we recommend you speak to a member of staff from that service in the first instance.

Or you can contact the Patient Support Service for help and advice.
Tel: 0300 013 4799
Email: feedback.cnwl@nhs.net

If you need an interpreter, or other support to give feedback, please let us know and we will do our best to make this possible for you.

Wellbeing for life
London | Milton Keynes | Kent | Surrey | Hampshire