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There is very limited information available regarding crushing metronidazole tablets and applying it to the wound or mixing it in a gel for topical application. However, anecdotal reports suggest that is carried out in practice to treat malodourous wounds. (Information regarding the use of licensed topical metronidazole preparations is not included in this enquiry.)

- The Palliative Care Formulary recommends that metronidazole can be applied topically as a gel, using a crushed 200mg tablet in lubricating gel. The dose from a crushed tablet is several times greater than that from commercial preparations. The higher dose may have an observable impact (reduced odour) within 24 hours compared with several days for commercial preparations.\(^1\)
- ‘Symptom Management in Advanced Cancer’ recommends that Metronidazole 200mg tablet crushed and applied to the ulcerated area mixed in KY jelly or 2% lidocaine jelly; benefit is often noticed within 12 hours.\(^2\)
- ‘Drugs in Palliative Care’ recommends applying a metronidazole 200mg crushed tablet (in suitable vehicle) as a treatment option for a malodourous fungating
tumour.\(^3\)

- The Hospice Africa Uganda Blue Book advises that “Metronidazole tablets crushed and placed on the fungating area, removes the smell and dries up the discharge. It also provides haemostasis and clears the infection caused by the anaerobic organism.”\(^4\)

- Paul et al conducted a literature review to summarise research findings about topical metronidazole used to decrease wound odour. They discussed that although nurses report success with sprinkling crushed metronidazole pills on wounds, no published reports of this method of topical application are available.\(^5\)

References


