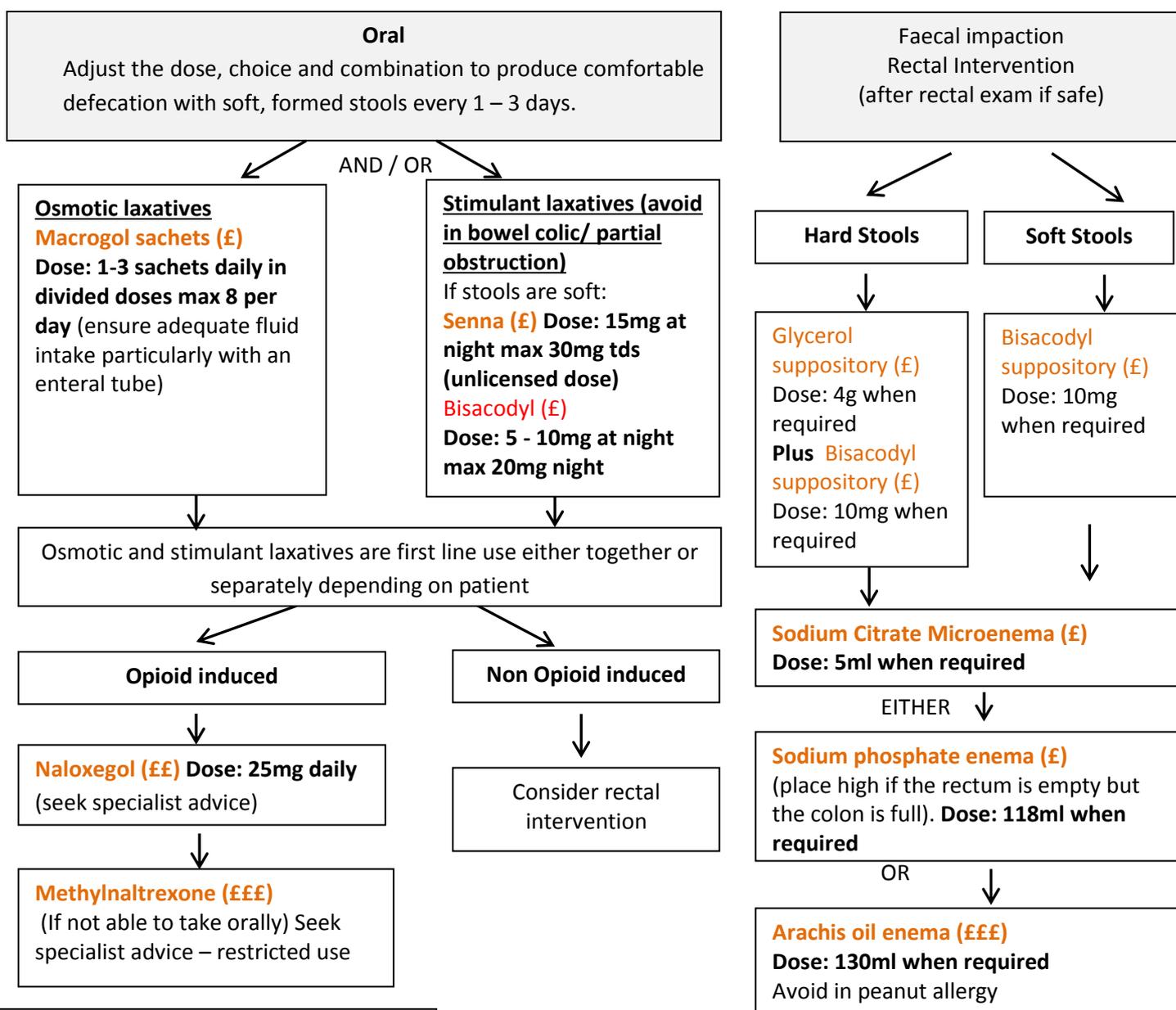


## Use of Laxatives to Manage Constipation in Palliative Care

**\*\*Please note there is separate guidance for 'non' palliative care\*\***

Assess patient and identify possible causes e.g. immobility, reduced food and fluid intake, medication, bowel pathology, hypocalcaemia, spinal cord compression, depression, confusion

- Address any reversible cause.
- Advise the person about increasing dietary fibre if appropriate, drinking an adequate fluid intake, adjusting toileting position and exercise where possible.
- Always offer a laxative when starting an opioid.
- Titrate the dose of laxatives every few days to achieve comfortable defecation.



### References:

- NHSNorthWestCoastStrategicClinicalNetworks Guidelines for the management of constipation in palliative care Nov2017
- <https://cks.nice.org.uk/palliative-care-constipation>
- Palliativedrugs.com
- Y&HPalliativeCareSymptomGuide2016v2

### Bowel Care

**Glycerol** Dose: one or two 4g suppositories in the morning  
**And / or**  
**Bisacodyl** Dose: one or two 10mg suppositories in the morning  
Every one to three days