Box 3

Calculate the dose of diamorphine for 24 hours' continuous SC infusion (CSCI)

Formula: Oral morphine dose over 24 hours / 3 = subcutaneous diamorphine dose

Step 1: Convert previous 24-hour morphine into equivalent diamorphine dose

example:

Oral morphine in past 24 hours	Equivalent diamorphine dose
Routine = 120mg (60mg + 60mg)	40mg
Breakthrough = 40mg (20mg + 20mg)	13mg (approx)
Total = 160mg	53mg

Step 2: Reduce dose by one-third for safety

example:

One-third of 53mg = 17.5mg (approx)
53mg – 17.5mg = 35.5mg

Diamorphine dose for 24-hour CSCI = 35mg

Breakthrough dose (one-sixth) = 5mg (approx; rounded down for safety and ease of drawing up)