

Understanding Older Adults and Medications

Depression:

SSRI class: generally well tolerated, effective, range of prices, must taper off to discontinue.

Celexa (Citalopram)

Lexapro (Escitalopram)-expensive

Paxil (Paroxetine)

Prozac (Fluoxetine)

Zoloft (Sertraline)

Other classes:

Wellbutrin- Potentially effective to aid smoking cessation.

Cymbalta- Also used for nerve pain and fibromyalgia.

Remeron- Also used for insomnia.

Desyrel- rarely used for depression, mostly for insomnia.

Effexor- Also used for nerve pain and panic disorder.

Pristiq- much like Effexor

Emsam- MANY dietary restrictions. Only used in depression that is resistant to all other treatments.

Anxiety:

Benzodiazepines: physical dependence, drowsiness. Occasionally can have exact opposite effect-actually increasing anxiety and restlessness.

Xanax (Alprazolam)

Ativan (Lorazepam)

SSRI antidepressants: See above for information

Buspar (Buspirone)- Should be taken routinely rather than only as needed.

Psychosis/agitation associated with dementia: All of these medications actually carry a warning against use in dementia patients due to increased mortality. Use **MUST** balance quality of life versus quantity of life. Most are still quite expensive.

Abilify (Aripiprazole)

Invega (Paliperidone)

Clozaril (Clozapine)

Risperdal (Risperidone)

Geodon (Ziprasidone)

Seroquel (Quetiapine)

Haldol (Haloperidol)

Zyprexa (Olanzapine)

Alzheimer's dementia: can increase irritability and aggression in a **SMALL** portion of the population.

Aricept (Donepezil)

Razadyne (Galantamine)

Exelon (Rivastigmine)

Namenda (Memantine)

Classes of drugs that should not be combined: To clarify, these combinations should be used with CAUTION:

Reglan with Parkinson's disease

Beta blocker blood pressure medications with diabetes

Potassium with ulcers

Potassium with urinary incontinence medications

SSRI antidepressants with Aspirin/Aleve/Advil

SSRI with certain other antidepressants or tramadol

Alpha blocker blood pressure meds with beta blocker blood pressure meds

Sleeping medications with breathing difficulties

H2 medications (Zantac) with PPI medications (Nexium, Prilosec)

Warfarin with Aspirin/Aleve/Advil

Water pills with Lithium

Aspirin/Advil/Aleve with high blood pressure

When medications are added or doses change monitor for:

Any change in functional status (good or bad)

Examples: eating, bowels, bladder, mobility

Any change in mental status (good or bad)

Examples: concentration, memory, ability to express thoughts, mood

Any new complaints

Examples: dry skin/eyes/mouth, pain anywhere, unexplained bruising

Best advice:

Seek out physician and pharmacist that have training and experience with the patient's age group and diagnoses. Additionally, they should be attentive to your concerns and take time to answer your questions. If you get "quick" answers that seem to be "one-size fits all", get a second or third opinion.

Tamara Willits, RPh

QualiCare, Inc

Phone: 1-785-841-1950

Fax: 1-785-841-1051

QualiCare, Inc is a pharmacy that specializes in caring for the elderly, especially those in long-term care facilities or assisted living facilities in Topeka, Lawrence, Kansas City and the surrounding areas. We provide medications, delivery, information, assistance with Medicare Part D selection and formulary compliance. We welcome the opportunity to be the pharmacy of choice for any patient in any facility in these areas. Consultation is available upon request.