



1st Step Program

reaching out...staying connected

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR MEDICATION

The use of medication is an important part of the treatment for psychosis; along with education about the illness for you and your family, group and individual counseling, monitoring of symptoms, family support, and cognitive behavioural therapy.

Goal:

- to relieve the symptoms of psychosis
- reduce the stress and anxiety these symptoms cause
- prevent further episodes of illness

There are many different medications available to treat the symptoms of psychosis. These medications are called antipsychotics, also referred to as neuroleptics.

These medications are divided into two categories: typical antipsychotics and the newer atypical antipsychotics.

Medications:

- Typical Antipsychotics: haloperidol (Haldol), trifluoperazine (Stelazine), perphenazine (Trilafon) and others
- Atypical Antipsychotics: risperidone (Risperdal), olanzapine (Zyprexa), quetiapine (Seroquel), Clozapine (clozaril)

These medications are equally effective in the treatment of an early episode of psychosis. The atypical antipsychotics are usually tried first because they also treat mood and cognitive impairments and differ in terms of the side effects profile.

Side Effects:

tiredness, sedation

dizziness

blurred vision

increased appetite

weight gain

dry mouth

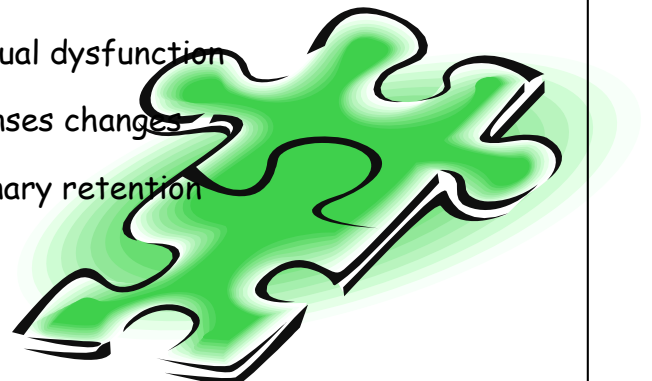
nausea

constipation

sexual dysfunction

menses changes

urinary retention



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Some other side effects include restlessness, stiffness, tremors, and involuntary movements. Please let your clinician know when you experience any side effects.

You may experience side effects before you notice the benefit of the medication. This is a sign that the medication is being absorbed into the body and starting to work. Do not stop taking the medication until you check with your Psychiatrist or nurse.

Most side effects experienced will diminish over time. Your side effects will be monitored closely and there are a variety of ways to help manage them.

Dosage and Duration:

Initially a low dose of antipsychotic will be started and may be gradually increased over time. It may take several weeks for the medication to have its full effect. If the antipsychotic medication does not produce satisfactory results another antipsychotic can be tried.

It is recommended that you take your medications everyday as prescribed even after your symptoms of psychosis are gone.

If you miss a dose take it as soon as you remember; unless it is close to the next scheduled dose of medication.

There are other medications that may also be used to help with other symptoms such as sleeping difficulties, depression, anxiety and mood swings.

My Medication:

Medication _____

Dose _____

Frequency _____

Medication _____

Dose _____

Frequency _____

If you have questions about your medications or their side effects please contact your EPI clinician or Sherri Papadedes, Nurse Clinician: 519-821-2060 ext. 752.