

Quick Medication Fact Sheet

Antipsychotic medication (example: aripiprazole, quetiapine, risperidone, olanzapine).

The client will need to complete periodic lab testing with the possibility of the medicine increasing serum glucose and lipids. Metabolic abnormalities could result from the treatment, including weight gain. If you are taking one of these medications, eating a proper diet and exercising are critical for your medical and mental health. The medication can also cause dyskinesias, including tardive dyskinesia and neuroleptic malignant syndrome (a life-threatening neurologic emergency associated with cognitive status change, muscle rigidity, and a high fever). Possible antipsychotic medication side effects consist of the following symptoms: sedation, tremors, and akathisia (restlessness). Please notify your provider if you are experiencing possible medication side effects.

Anxiety Medication: Benzodiazepines (example: clonazepam, alprazolam, diazepam, lorazepam).

These medications may be potentially addictive. The prescription cannot be refilled early or replaced if lost or stolen. The client will need to avoid drugs and alcohol and be very cautious when using this medication with other sedating medicines, such as pain medication. The client must be careful and realize how the drug makes them feel before completing daily activities (do not operate machinery while taking these medications). Benzodiazepines can cause the following side effects: sedation, daytime grogginess, respiratory depression, and confusion, and you are at an increased risk of falling. Please notify your provider if you are experiencing any of these symptoms.

Valproic Acid (Depakote): Mood Stabilizer

Valproic Acid (Depakote) can affect hematologic, pancreatic, hepatic, and dermatologic systems. Periodic lab testing is needed to assess their valproic acid level, liver, and blood counts. Valproic Acid has the potential to cause teratogenic effects. While taking this medication, a female client should use hormonal contraception, a form of barrier contraception, or practice abstinence to prevent getting pregnant. If you take this medication, periodic lab testing must be completed. The following side effects may occur; dizziness, hair loss, fatigue, tremor, nausea, and hepatotoxicity (an increase in liver enzymes).

Lamotrigine (Lamictal): Mood Stabilizer

While taking lamotrigine, there is a risk of a severe rash called Stevens-Johnson syndrome due to taking the medication. Call your provider if you are experiencing these symptoms. The client must know to go to the emergency room if developing signs of a more severe rash. If the medication is stopped for five days, the drug will need to be restarted at a lower dosage. Please notify your provider of missed doses of medication.

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Lithium: Mood Stabilizer

Lithium can affect the kidneys and thyroid functioning. The client will need to stay well hydrated, and periodic lab testing will need to be completed to monitor lithium levels. Symptoms of lithium toxicity: nausea, weakness, worsening tremor, increased urination, poor concentration, and an acne-like rash. The client needs to know how to recognize signs of increased lithium levels.

Mirtazapine (Remeron)

Mirtazapine can cause sedation and appetite stimulation resulting in weight gain. Although rare, mirtazapine has been associated with severe neutropenia (with or without infection). Appropriate lab monitoring will need to be completed periodically.

SSRIs: Treat depression and anxiety: (examples include: sertraline, escitalopram, fluoxetine)

SSRI medications target the neurotransmitter serotonin. Taking several drugs that affect this chemical can increase the risk of too much of the chemical resulting in serotonin syndrome. Always consult your provider before taking over-the-counter medications (for example, St. John's Wort can interfere with your prescription). The signs of serotonin syndrome include the following symptoms: rapid/irregular heartbeat, increased agitation, mental status changes, muscle rigidity, and what to do if this occurs. When taking SSRIs, you may experience side effects of medication: nausea, stomach upset, insomnia, anxiety, weight gain, headache, and sexual side effects.

Sleep Medications (example: Ambien)

Sleep medication can cause drowsiness the following day, and clients should be cautious when operating machinery or other tasks that require sustained attention. The client also understands that sleep medicines can cause parasomnias, including sleep driving. The client should not drink alcohol or use illegal drugs and be very careful with other over-the-counter or prescription drugs that can also cause sedation.

Stimulant Medication: Treatment of ADHD

Stimulants are Schedule II controlled medications. Stimulant medication should not be shared or taken in any manner outside of as prescribed. Stimulant medications have the potential to cause the following symptoms: anxiety, decreased appetite, weight loss, headache, and cardiac effects as well. Blood pressure should be monitored during treatment. If the client has cardiovascular disease, alternate medications should be discussed. Children's height and weight will need to be monitored frequently.

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Carbamazepine (Tegretol): Mood Stabilizer

Tegretol can affect the body's hepatic, hematologic, and dermatologic systems. The client knows how to recognize signs and symptoms of dysfunction in those areas and watch for benign and severe rashes. The client must be aware of the need for periodic lab testing to assess the Tegretol level, liver function, and CBC. Tegretol can interfere with certain types of hormonal contraception, and how the client needs to have a form of barrier contraception or practice abstinence to prevent getting pregnant because of the risk of possible teratogenic effects with Tegretol.

Topiramate (Topamax): Mood Stabilizer

While the client is taking Topamax, there is the possibility of metabolic acidosis, decreased sweating, fever, increased intraocular pressure, and kidney stones. The client will need to stay hydrated, recognize the signs of these potential side effects, and know what to do if these symptoms occur. The client also understands that using Topamax in this indication is considered off-label for mood stabilization. Topamax can interfere with certain types of hormonal contraception, and how the client needs to have a form of barrier contraception or practice abstinence to prevent getting pregnant because of the risk of possible teratogenic effects of Topamax.

Trazodone

Trazodone can be sedating in low doses, and the client must not take this medication if they are going to operate machinery. If trazodone is used for sleep, it is considered off-label usage. In males, trazodone may cause priapism (prolonged erection). Priapism can be a life-threatening emergency, and the client must go to the hospital if priapism occurs. The most common side effects of trazodone include the following: sedation, dry mouth, hypotension (low blood pressure), headache, and blurred vision.

Oxcarbazepine (Trileptal): Mood Stabilization

Utilizing Trileptal as a mood stabilizer is considered off-label, as it is primarily used for seizure disorders; however, research shows efficacy in treating cycling mood disorders. Trileptal can interfere with certain types of hormonal contraception. If the client is using contraception, they need to have a form of barrier contraception or abstinence to prevent getting pregnant because of the risk of potential teratogenic effects of Trileptal.

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Under 25 FDA BLACK BOX WARNING FOR ALL SSRIs (example: sertraline, fluoxetine, escitalopram)

There is an FDA warning that medications used to treat depression may cause an increase in suicidal thoughts or behaviors in people under age 25. If the client or family notices any onset or worsening of symptoms, the client needs to notify the clinic or crisis line or present to an emergency department for immediate treatment.

Pregnancy Risk

If the client is planning to get pregnant, please notify your provider immediately to discuss treatment options and risks associated with treatment.