



The Must Knows for Antipsychotic Use

抗精神病藥物使用須知(英文)

The types and actions of the medications

1. Antipsychotics (oral form and injection form)

Stabilizes mood, reduces disorganized thought, and improvement in symptoms is observed in over 70 % of the patients in the areas of aggressiveness, hyperactivity, tension, hostility, insomnia, social withdrawal, poor reality testing, hallucination, etc., so that patients can carry on with their family lives, social lives and occupation.

2. Anti-side effect medications (oral form and injection form)

Taking antipsychotics may be occasionally accompanied by transient side effects, if taken with anti-side effects medication, discomforts caused by the side effects of the medication may be prevented.

3. Hypnotics

Indicated for those with insomnia, fragmented sleep, disrupted sleep, early awakenings.

The must knows about taking the medication

Precautions about taking the medication and the ways to take them

1. Other than the fact that hypnotics shall be used before bedtime, antipsychotics and anti-side effect medication can be taken according to individual' s life style and occupational situation. If medication is not taken due to forgetfulness, it can be taken when remembered, however beware the time between two dosing times shall not be too near, and medication dosage shall be maintained at certain amount. If you have

difficulty taking the medication according to the physician's advices, please feel free to discuss with your doctors.

2. It's not recommended to take medications from two psychiatric hospitals at the same time, in case of drug overdoses.

How long antipsychotics should be taken?

Exactly how long should psychiatric patients receive antipsychotic treatments? It's controversial up to this point, but generally the antipsychotics shall be taken for a period of time, or relapse is a common consequence. Long term medication is especially indicated for those with multiple relapses and repeated hospitalizations .

How important regular drug compliance is in prevention of relapses of the disease?

According to recent studies, there's a 30 % relapse rate (every 3 out of 10 people) in a year among those who are regularly medicated. As for those with irregular drug compliance, the relapse rate is 70%. One's social function will decline with each relapses, occupational and academic functions are also affected. Long term interpersonal relationship will be hard to maintain between family, friends and relatives.

Therefore, when you have questions with your medication, it is not wise to adjust the medication dosage by yourself, mean while meeting with your doctor is encouraged to discuss about how long the how much medication should be taken.

When female patients are planning for a pregnancy or find herself pregnant, discussion with doctor about medication is needed.

Medication side effects and management

Both Chinese and western medication have side effects of their own. Appropriate and adequate use of the medication can reduce the chances of side effects occurring to the minimum. The occurrence of side effects may vary from individual to individual.

If you suspect that some of the discomforts you are feeling are due to medication side effects, you should discuss with your physician. However, we should not be over concerned with side effects and miss the chance for treatment. The followings are the possible side effects that might occur and their managements.

Side effects	Management
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Sedation	Transient, short term sleepiness, it could be tolerated for a period of the time. But if the sedative effects are intolerable, discussion with the doctor about changing the time the medication is taken may be needed.
Parkinsonism, hypersalivation, muscle rigidity, shuffling gait, involuntary movements, tremor, masked face, bradykinesia, psychomotor retardation	<p>Mild symptoms :</p> <p>discomfort maybe reduced by rest and slow exercises (walking).</p> <p>Tremor could be minimized by putting hands in your pockets, crossing your arms and crossing your legs.</p> <p>When your discomfort persisted or aggravated, it' s time to discuss with your doctor about medication adjustment.</p>
Orthostatic hypotension	Rest for a moment when you change your positions (sitting up or standing up for example), started walking or moving when the dizziness subsided.
Dry mouth	Use few amounts of water to cleanse your mouth, or hold water in your mouth, or chewing non-sweetened gums.
Constipation	Encourage intake in fluids and fibers (vegetable, fruits) and adequate exercises
Blurred vision	Transient, reversible

Restlessness, akathisia	Allow one to walk around, and give appropriate rests.
Amenorrhea or irregular menses for the women	Transient and not affecting the fertility issue or health. If still concerned or planning for a pregnancy, please discuss with your physician.
Impotence, ejaculatory problems and difficult urination for the men	Transient, reversible

若有任何疑問，請不吝與我們聯絡
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