

Potentially Inappropriate Medications Used in Older Adults

Adapted from:
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Inappropriate Medication Use in Older Adults. *Journal of the American
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Drug Class	Generic (Brand) Name	Concern	Recommendation
Tricyclic antidepressants	Amitriptyline (Elavil) Doxepin (Sinequan) Nortriptyline (Pamelor) Imipramine (Tofranil) Desipramine (Norpramin)	*Risk of confusion, dry mouth, and constipation *Increased risk of falling *CAUTION WITH: Dementia, Chronic Constipation	* Minimize doses whenever possible *Consider SSRIs for depression *Do not use in combination with other anticholinergic medications *Avoid using for insomnia
Antihistamines 1st generation	Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) Clemastine (Tavist) Chlorpheniramine (Clor-Trimeton) Dimenhydrinate (Dramamine)	*Risk of confusion, dry mouth, and constipation *Increased risk of falling *CAUTION WITH: Dementia	*Use 2nd generation antihistamines (Claritin, Allegra, Zyrtec) *Minimize duration of therapy *Do not use in combination with other anticholinergic medications *Avoid using for insomnia
Antispasmodics	Dicyclomine (Bentyl) Hyoscamine (Levsin) Clidinium Compound (Librax)	*Risk of confusion, dry mouth, and constipation *Increased risk of falling *CAUTION WITH: Dementia	*Monitor kidney function *Minimize dose and duration of use
Benzodiazepines Long-acting	Chlordiazepoxide (Librium) Diazepam (Valium) Chlorazepate (Tranxene) Flurazepam (Dalmane)	*Prolonged sedation *Increased risk of falling *Increased sensitivity to the medication *Risk of cognitive impairment and delirium	*Avoid use of all benzodiazepines if possible *Use shorter-acting benzodiazepines if needed (lorazepam, oxazepam, temazepam)
Antipsychotics 1st generation	Thioridazine (Mellaril) Haloperidol (Haldol) Chlorpromazine (Thorazine)	*Risk of confusion, dry mouth, and constipation *Increased risk of falling *CAUTION WITH: Dementia, Seizures, Parkinson's Disease	*Determine rationale for appropriate use - should not be used for dementia-related psychosis *Use atypical antipsychotics if pharmacotherapy is deemed appropriate
Pain Medications	Ketorolac (Toradol) Meperidine (Demerol) Tramadol (Ultram)	*Lack of efficacy *Increased confusion, dizziness, and risk of falling *Renal toxicity with long-term use *Potential for gastrointestinal toxicity *CAUTION WITH: Dementia, Seizures	*Should not be considered first choice for pain *Consider alternate options for pain with caution
NSAIDs	Ibuprofen (Motrin) Naproxen (Naprosyn, Aleve) Indomethacin (Indocin) Etodolac (Lodine) Diclofenac (Voltaren)	*Potential for gastrointestinal toxicity and bleeding *Risk of congestive heart failure exacerbation *Risk of bleeding *CAUTION WITH: Clotting Disorders, Anticoagulation Therapy, Heart Failure, Gastric or Duodenal Ulcer	*Use acetaminophen (Tylenol) for mild to moderate pain *Limit dose and duration of use *Use in combination with a proton pump inhibitor such as omeprazole (Prilosec) *Avoid use in congestive heart failure
Cardiac Medications	Digoxin (Lanoxin)	*Toxicity due to decreased renal function	*Monitor kidney function *Minimize dose (<125 mcg daily) and duration of use
Muscle Relaxants	Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril) Carisoprodol (Soma) Metaxalone (Skelaxin) Methocarbamol (Robaxin)	*Increased dizziness and drowsiness *Risk of confusion, dry mouth, and constipation *Increased Risk of falling	*Minimize dose and duration of use *Do not use in combination with other anticholinergic medications Consider topical analgesics, acetaminophen, and physical therapy for injuries

Note: This chart is a summary of some of the medications that may increase falls risk in the elderly. It does not contain all medications that may potentially be inappropriate for use in the elderly.