

Toolbox for treatment of primary insomnia

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KEYWORDS

insomnia, adverse effects

Benzodiazepines

Brand Name	Generic Name	Adverse Effects	Comments
Alprazolam	Xanax	Tolerance, withdrawal, seizure, anterograde amnesia	Longer half-life in elderly patients Dose adjustments for hepatic disease
Clonazepam	Klonopin	Same	Longer half-life in elderly patients Dose adjustments for hepatic disease
Diazepam	Valium	Same	Longer half-life in elderly patients Dose adjustments for hepatic disease
Lorazepam	Ativan	Same	Longer half-life in elderly patients No dose adjustments for mild to moderate renal or hepatic impairment
Triazolam	Halcion	Same	Longer half-life in elderly patients Dose adjustments for hepatic disease
Temazepam	Restoril	Same	Longer half-life in elderly patients No dose adjustments for mild to moderate renal or hepatic impairment

Non-Benzodiazepine Receptor Agonists

Brand Name	Generic Name	Adverse Effects	Comments
Zolpidem	Ambien Ambien CR Intermezzo Edluar	Dizziness, forgetfulness, falls, especially in elderly; night eating syndrome	Dose adjustments for hepatic disease Approved for both short and long term use Additional formulations for sublingual (Intermezzo) or oral spray (Edluar) usage Complex sleep behaviors
Eszopiclone	Lunesta	Daytime sedation, dizziness, dry mouth, hallucinations, sleep walking	Short term and chronic insomnia Complex sleep behaviors
Zaleplon	Sonata	Same as zolpidem	Short term use only Avoid administration with high fat meal May use a second dose in the middle of the night if awoken Complex sleep behaviors

Melatonin Agonists

Brand Name	Generic Name	Adverse Effects	Comments
Ramelteon	Rozerem	Somnolence and dizziness, possible effects on reproductive endocrinology (prolactin, testosterone)	Long term use Difficulty with sleep onset Avoid administration with high fat meal Do not break tablet
Melatonin	N/A	Headache, drowsiness, upset stomach	Recommended for short term use – Up to two months Jet lag

Antihistamines

Brand Name	Generic Name	Adverse Effects	Comments
Diphenhydramine	Benadryl	Dry mouth, constipation, blurry vision, confusion, falls	Available over-the-counter
Hydroxyzine	Vistaril/ Atarax	Decreased mental alertness, headache, dry mouth	
Doxylamine	Ingredient in Nyquil	Dry mouth, ataxia, urinary retention, memory deficits	Available over-the-counter

Tricyclic Antidepressants

Brand Name	Generic Name	Adverse Effects	Comments
Amitriptyline	Elavil	Cardiac toxicity, anticholinergic effects	May be deadly in overdose Possibility of developing withdrawal symptoms if discontinued quickly
Doxepin	Sinequan	Appetite loss, constipation, diarrhea, dizziness, drowsiness, dry mouth, excess sweating, headache, heartburn	May be deadly in overdose Possibility of developing withdrawal symptoms if discontinued quickly

Other

Brand Name	Generic Name	Adverse Effects	Comments
Trazodone	Desyrel	Anticholinergic effects, priapism, dizziness	
Mirtazepine	Remeron	Weight gain, dry mouth, daytime drowsiness	Primary use is for depression Triglycerides may become elevated
Quetiapine	Seroquel Seroquel XR	Weight gain, dry mouth, dizziness	May be at risk of tardive dyskinesia with long term use

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