

PHARMACY

Drug Information

Medications used to treat Psychosis



What are Anti-Psychotic Medications?

- These medications help to improve the overall psychological and social functioning by stabilising mental function.
- Taking them correctly can relieve symptoms of psychosis such as hallucinations (hearing voices, seeing visions), delusions (false beliefs, unreal thoughts), and prevent symptoms from recurring. They can also help organise thinking and speech, and reduce tense feelings and uncontrolled anger.
- Anti-psychotic medications are an important part of managing major mental illness which can cause distress to the individual, their families, or to people around them.
- These medications may be used to treat conditions such as mood disorders, sleep disorders, or behavioural disturbances due to dementia.

What Anti-Psychotics are Commonly Used?

Medication Class	Medication Name
First-generation Anti-psychotics	Chlorpromazine, Haloperidol, Trifluoperazine, Sulpiride. Injectable forms: Modecate, Fluanxol, Clopixol
Second-generation Anti-psychotics	Aripiprazole, Asenapine, Clozapine, Olanzapine, Quetiapine, Risperidone

How are Anti-Psychotics Administered / Taken?

- Take these medications with or after food to minimise gastric irritation. The dose and frequency of the medicines may differ among individuals and you should strictly follow the instructions given by your doctor.
- Symptoms may take several weeks to improve after starting medication.
- Recovery from the illness may also require long term treatment with the medication, even after improvement of symptoms. Thus, it is important that you take your medication regularly, even if you feel well.
- Do not stop taking your medication without first consulting your doctor. These medications prevent symptoms from occurring again, and

discontinuing them without your doctor's advice may result in the recurrence or worsening of symptoms.

- If you miss a dose, take the missed dose as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, wait until then and take only the usual dose. Do not exceed the daily recommended dosage.

Can Anti-Psychotics be Administered / Taken with Other Medications?

- These medications can interact with other medications. Please inform your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking other medications, including supplements, traditional or herbal remedies.
- Avoid alcohol as it can increase drowsiness or dizziness caused by these medicines.
- Avoid excessive intake of caffeinated beverages (coffee, tea, colas etc.) as they may cause anxiety, agitation and restlessness, and may act against some of the beneficial effects of these medicines.
- Avoid smoking cigarettes as it may act against the beneficial effects of these medicines.

What are the Important Side Effects of Anti-Psychotics?

- Side effects can occur with any drug consumption. However, side effects are reduced when medications are taken according to your doctor's instructions.
- If you develop drug allergy symptoms such as rashes, facial swelling or shortness of breath, please seek medical attention immediately.
- Contact your doctor if any of these side effects persist or are causing you serious pain and discomfort.

Side Effect	Management
Drowsiness or feeling of dizziness on sudden change in posture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not drive or operate machinery • Avoid alcohol as it can increase drowsiness • Get up slowly from a lying or sitting position

Dry mouth, blurred vision, constipation, difficulty in urination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider sucking on ice chips, sugarless candy or use saliva replacement products to relieve dry mouth. • Ensure sufficient intake of fluid and fiber to prevent constipation.
Sensitivity of skin to sunlight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid long periods of direct sunlight • Wear protective clothing • Use sunscreen on exposed skin
More sensitive to hot and cold temperatures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dress to stay warm during cold weather • Dress to stay cool during hot weather
Muscle stiffness, tremor, restlessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor as soon as possible. Your doctor may prescribe other medications to control these symptoms.
Muscle spasm (face or body twitching, or uncontrolled lips, tongue, jaw, arms or legs movement)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor immediately.
Fast heartbeat, breathlessness, fainting or chest pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor immediately.
Sudden fever and confusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor immediately.
Blood disorders (unusual bruising or bleeding, fever, sore throat, mouth ulcers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor immediately.
Seizures or fits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor immediately.

Yellowing of skin or eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor immediately.
Weight gain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a healthy diet and exercise regularly. • Discuss with your doctor if it is of concern.
Changes in menstrual cycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor.
Sexual function disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform your doctor.

Do I Need Regular Monitoring When Taking These Medications?

- You will need to be monitored by your doctor regularly while taking these medications. Your doctor will need to assess the effectiveness of the medicines for your condition and monitor for the side effects.
- Depending on the medicines you are taking, your doctor may need you to do blood tests, vision tests and electrocardiogram when necessary.

Are There any Special Precautions That I Need to Take?

- It is important to inform your doctor if you intend to conceive or breastfeed while taking this medication.
- Cigarette smoking may change the amount of medications in your body. Inform your doctor if you are making any changes to your current smoking habit.

How do I Store These Medications?

- Store your medication in a cool, dry place away from heat, moisture and direct sunlight.

Please keep all medications out of reach of children.

If you have any problem with your treatment, please contact your doctor, pharmacist or nurse clinician.

