

OLANZAPINE

(Zyprexa®, Zydys®)

PURPOSE

Olanzapine is a medication that is used to manage symptoms of psychosis such as hearing voices or strange or false beliefs or paranoia. Psychosis can be found in schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or, depression. Olanzapine may also be used to help in the treatment of mood disorders such as mania or depression without psychosis.

Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder are illnesses that occur due to imbalances of certain chemicals or “messengers” in the brain. **Olanzapine** works to restore the balance of certain brain chemicals.

BENEFITS FROM OLANZAPINE

The symptoms which antipsychotics have been found to help include:

- + Hallucinations (e.g. hearing voices of people who aren't there, seeing things, feeling unusual body sensations)
- + Delusions (e.g. strongly held false belief that may be of paranoid or grandiose nature)
- + Disorganized thoughts or speeded-up thoughts

Other Benefits:

- + May help you to feel calmer, less fearful and help you sleep better
- + May improve, stabilize or help settle your mood.
- + May help you to think more clearly and concentrate better on your activities

STREET DRUGS WILL DECREASE THE BENEFITS OF OLANZAPINE AND INCREASE CHANCES OF REHOSPITALIZATION

BE PATIENT – it takes a while

This medication will start to help after a few days but may take several weeks to work with the full benefit after 3 – 6 months.

Take this medication **ONLY** as prescribed by your doctor. **DO NOT** take more of it, or use it more often than recommended.

DO NOT stop this medication suddenly without consulting your doctor.

If you forget to take a dose, you should take it as soon as possible. If it is close to the time of your next dose, you should skip the missed dose and continue with your regular schedule. **Do NOT** take two doses at once.

SIDE EFFECTS OF OLANZAPINE

- ☞ Drowsiness
- ☞ Dizziness or a drop in blood pressure when standing up
- ☞ Constipation
- ☞ Weight Gain
- ☞ Restlessness
- ☞ Dry Mouth

Some of these side effects disappear with treatment, while others may not. You may experience other side effects not listed here. Please check with your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist if any side effect becomes bothersome.

Increases in weight, blood sugar and cholesterol can occur with antipsychotics. Occasional blood tests will be required to monitor for changes. Healthy eating and regular exercise will reduce the chance of these occurring.

Inform your Doctor as soon as possible if you develop:

- ☞ Dizziness or fainting
- ☞ Tachycardia (fast heart beat)
- ☞ High temperature or fever

- ☞ Muscle spasms (unusual weakness or movement of face, tongue or hands)
- ☞ Muscle rigidity or stiffness
- ☞ Shaking or tremors

Many of these side effects can be controlled either by a dosage adjustment or by the addition of another medication.

PRECAUTIONS

- Smoking will lower the amount of olanzapine in your body and if you stop smoking olanzapine levels will increase. Inform your doctor and pharmacist if you intend to stop or start smoking while on this medication.
- As olanzapine may interact with other medications, you should check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any prescription or over-the-counter medications
- As olanzapine may cause drowsiness, you may wish to know how you react to this medicine before you drive, use hazardous machinery or perform other tasks that require alertness
- Consult your Doctor before consuming any alcoholic beverages while on any medication
- Tell your doctor if you are pregnant or breast-feeding before you take this medication

STORAGE OF MEDICATION

Store away from heat and direct light. Avoid storing in the bathroom medicine cabinet as the heat or moisture may cause the medication to breakdown.

KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN

*Approved by Riverview Hospital
Priorities and Evaluation Committee 2006*



**BC Mental Health &
Addiction Services**

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority