

# **LONG ACTING DEPOT ANTIPSYCHOTICS**

## **PURPOSE**

Examples: Flupenthixol (Fluanxol<sup>®</sup> depot), Fluphenazine (Modecate<sup>®</sup> depot), Haloperidol (Haldol<sup>®</sup> depot), Zuclopenthixol (Clopixol<sup>®</sup> depot) are antipsychotic medications that are used to manage symptoms of psychosis. Psychosis can be found in schizophrenia, bipolar disorder or depression.

These illnesses occur due to an imbalance of certain chemicals or “messenger” in the brain. Long acting depot antipsychotics work to restore the balance of certain brain chemicals.

## **BENEFITS FROM LONG ACTING DEPOT ANTIPSYCHOTICS**

Different individuals may have different symptoms of varying severity. 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 a paranoid or grandiose nature)
- + Thoughts that are disorganized or speeded-up
- + Mood that is irritated, agitated, over-elated or hyper excited mood
- + Some antipsychotics may also help symptoms of social withdrawal, lack of interest in oneself and in others and poor motivation.

## **LONG-ACTING INJECTION**

A long-acting injection is also called a depot injection.

The medication is dissolved in sesame or coconut oil and is slowly released into the body over a few weeks after injection. An injection is given every 2 to 4 weeks allowing for a stable amount of medication to be in the body at all times.

Please inform your nurse or doctor if you have AN ALLERGY TO NUTS.

## **HOW QUICKLY DO THEY WORK**

This medication will begin to help some symptoms such as agitation or sleep disturbances in the first few weeks as it is released in the body; however it may take up to 6 to 8 weeks to decrease the intensity and frequency of other symptoms of psychosis. The full benefits may be seen after 3 to 6 months.

## **POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LONG ACTING DEPOT ANTIPSYCHOTICS**

- ☞ Drowsiness
- ☞ Dry mouth or Blurred vision
- ☞ Constipation
- ☞ Weight gain
- ☞ Dizziness due to a drop in blood pressure when standing up

Many of these side effects disappear with ongoing treatment.

You may experience other side effects not listed here. Please check with your doctor, nurse or pharmacist if any side effect becomes bothersome.

## **Inform your Doctor as soon as possible if you develop:**

- ☞ Muscle spasms (unusual weakness or movements of face, tongue, hands, neck or other parts of the body)
- ☞ Muscle rigidity or stiffness
- ☞ Shaking or tremors
- ☞ Restlessness or agitation
- ☞ High temperature or fever, tachycardia (fast heartbeat), or persistent dizziness
- ☞ Breast tenderness, liquid discharge from breasts or missed periods

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

## **PRECAUTIONS**

- Always inform your doctor, nurse, dentist or pharmacist about your medication before any new treatments, prescriptions or over-the-counter medications. Some medication may interact (or conflict) with your antipsychotic medication
- As antipsychotics may cause drowsiness, you may wish to avoid or use caution when driving, using hazardous machinery or performing tasks that require alertness until you are familiar with the effects of your 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 as heat or moisture may cause the medication to breakdown. This medication will likely be stored at your doctor's office or mental health team for you.



BC Mental Health & Addiction Services

An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority