

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Executive Office of Health and Human Services  
Department of Mental Health

**MEDICATION INFORMATION MANUAL**



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Commissioner  
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Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
Department of Mental Health Medication Information Manual

**PREFACE**

The Department of Mental Health (DMH) Medication Information Manual is a guide to the most commonly prescribed medications. It is intended to assist caregivers and consumers in understanding the nature, purpose and possible side effects of each medicine. This information should also assist prescribing clinicians in the process of obtaining informed consent.

This manual is not intended to replace a frank and detailed discussion about the proposed medication between the prescribing clinician and the consumer (and guardian if applicable). The information given is not exhaustive and does not attempt to cover every issue involving a given medication. If a consumer has questions or concerns about a medication he or she is taking, it is always best to contact the prescribing clinician to discuss the specific issue. In particular, since many people see more than one doctor (for example, a primary care physician in addition to a psychiatrist), it is very important for the consumer to make sure that the prescribing clinician(s) are aware of all the medications currently being prescribed so that potential drug interactions can be assessed. This includes herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with prescribed medications. Additional drug information may be found at the following sites: psychoactive medications for children and adolescents at [www.state.ma.us/dmh/publications/PsychoactiveBooklet.pdf](http://www.state.ma.us/dmh/publications/PsychoactiveBooklet.pdf); psychiatric medications at <http://www.nlm.nih.gov/health/publications/mental-health-medications/index.shtml>; and general drug information at [www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginformation.html).

Medication is just one element of a comprehensive health program. Exercise, diet, regular medical care, and appropriate counseling are other important parts of an overall plan to stay as healthy as possible. Consumers should work with their providers to address all of these issues.

This manual is in the public domain and may be reproduced as is in its current format. Both generic and brand names of drugs are used, for example, "sertraline" (brand name Zoloft®). No changes are to be introduced into the document except by the DMH Division of Clinical and Professional Services. It will be updated as advances in medicine and practice proceed. Changes that occur between editions of this manual will be added as they occur under **Section VII: Changes and/or Medications Added After Publication Date**. Suggestions for changes may be forwarded to me.

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**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**Department of Mental Health Medication Information Manual**

***DISCLAIMER***

The information, opinions and recommendations presented in this Department of Mental Health (DMH) Medication Information Manual are presented in summary form and are intended to provide individuals only with a broad understanding and knowledge of certain medications. Users of the Manual should verify and update the information, opinions and recommendations independently. **NOTHING CONTAINED IN THE MANUAL IS, OR SHOULD BE CONSIDERED, OR USED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL ADVICE, DIAGNOSIS OR TREATMENT.** The Department of Mental Health does not endorse, approve, recommend or certify any information, medication, method of treatment, or company presented or mentioned in the Manual. The Manual is not intended to replace, and does not replace, the specialized training and professional judgment of a licensed health care or mental health care professional. Individuals should seek the advice of a physician or other health care provider with any questions regarding medications, personal health or medical conditions.

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**Brand Name**

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# **I. ANTIANXIETY/SLEEP MEDICATIONS**

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

*The following information is intended to supplement, not substitute for, the expertise and judgment of your physician, pharmacist or other healthcare professional. It should not be construed to indicate that use of the drug is safe, appropriate, or effective for you. Consult your healthcare professional before using this drug.*

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Please read the DISCLAIMER carefully before using the Manual.*

### ***Benzodiazepines***

**alprazolam (brand name Xanax),  
chlordiazepoxide (brand name Librium),  
clonazepam (brand name Klonopin),  
clorazepate dipotassium (brand name Tranxene),  
diazepam (brand name Valium),  
lorazepam (brand name Ativan).**

**Specific medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications that are called antianxiety medications. They are used to treat the symptoms that are common with anxiety, such as excessive worry, stress, tension, and nervousness. They are also used to relieve sleeping problems, and side effects from other medications such as the antipsychotics. There are other medical uses for this medication, which may include controlling the symptoms of alcohol withdrawal, relief of muscle spasms, or stopping or preventing seizures.

### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. Potential abuse and/or addiction risk with use of this medication is possible. If you have a history of drug abuse or drug addiction, please inform your physician.

### **Relatively common:**

Drowsiness,\* Dizziness, Slow reactions

### **Less common:**

Problems with memory, Slurred speech, Poor concentration, Poor coordination, Muscle weakness, Increased anger or agitation

**This medication is considered to be habit-forming. Most people will have withdrawal side effects if they stop taking it suddenly. Withdrawal effects may include worsening anxiety, nausea, vomiting, sleep loss, tremors,\* low blood pressure, or seizures.\***

## ***Benzodiazepines (con't)***

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is potential risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to inform your doctor if you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make these side effects worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems as mentioned above. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

### **Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved some of the benzodiazepines for use in young people. Approved ages vary from one medication to another.

<b>GENERIC</b>	<b>BRAND NAME</b>	<b>APPROVED FOR AGES:</b>	<b>USED FOR</b>
Chlordiazepoxide	Librium®	6 years and older; 12 years by injection	
Clorazepate	Tranxene®	9 years and older	Seizure control
Diazepam	Valium®	6 months and older	Non-psychiatric purposes
Lorazepam	Ativan®	12 years and older; 18 years by injection	
Alprazolam	Xanax®	18 years and older	

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### ***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Buspirone (brand name Buspar)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used to treat the symptoms that are common with anxiety, such as excessive worry, stress, tension, and nervousness. It is also used sometimes to treat aggression or other psychiatric illnesses that your doctor can explain.

This medication takes time to have an effect. You may notice some of the benefits after several weeks, but the full effects may take longer.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dizziness, Drowsiness, \* Nausea, and Headache

#### **Less common:**

Difficulty sleeping, Stomach pain, Diarrhea, Tiredness, Excitement, Weakness, Numbness, Blurred vision, Lightheadedness, Dry mouth

#### **Rare: Allergic Reaction**

One or a combination of the following symptoms, itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be discussed with your doctor beforehand.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

***Buspirone (brand name Buspar) (con't)***

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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***Eszopiclone (brand name Lunesta)***

***Zaleplon (brand name Sonata)***

***Zolpidem (brand name Ambien)***

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

These medications are used to help people sleep. They are most commonly used as a short-term (up to 10 days) treatment for sleep problems. Occasionally it may be necessary to use these medications for a longer period of time.

### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. If you have a history of drug abuse or drug addiction please inform your physician.

### **Relatively common:**

Drowsiness,\* Dizziness, Diarrhea, Lightheadedness, Difficulty with coordination.

### **Less common:**

Memory problems, Confusion, Unusual dreams, Unusual thoughts or feelings, or Changes in behavior.

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk and the effect on infants is unknown.

### **Other risks:**

This medication is intended to help you fall asleep. *Zolpidem* usually starts to work fast so you should take it only when you are ready to go to bed. The effects usually clear by the next morning, but some people may still feel sleepy during the day. This could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

*Eszopiclone (brand name Lunesta) (Con't)*  
*Zaleplon (brand name Sonata)*  
*Zolpidem (brand name Ambien)*

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people less than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

## **II. ANTIDEPRESSANT MEDICATIONS**

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **MAOI (Monoamine oxidase inhibitor) Antidepressants** **phenelzine (brand name Nardil)** **selegiline (brand name Emsam Patch)** **tranylcypromine (brand name Parnate)**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone. This medication may also be used to reduce anxiety, panic attacks, or unreasonable fears (phobias).

You should understand that all antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks or more.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Sedation, Drowsiness,\* Dizziness or lightheadedness (especially when getting up suddenly from a lying or sitting position), Low blood pressure, Constipation, Dry mouth, Blurry vision, Weight gain, Upset stomach, Difficulty passing urine, Unusually fast or uneven heartbeat, Changes in sexual drive and function such as inability to reach orgasm.

#### **Less common:**

Confusion, Seizures,\* Sweating, Liver problems, High blood pressure reactions (explained below), Chest pain, Headache, Rash, Worsening of glaucoma\* (if this were to happen you would get severe eye pain, and you would need medical help)

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you.

## **MAOI (Mono-amine oxidase inhibitor) Antidepressants (con't)**

If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breast-feeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs with this medication must be completely avoided. The use of alcohol in certain forms while on this medication can cause a serious reaction that causes dangerously high blood pressure. This is also true for certain foods and medications, especially antidepressants such as fluoxetine (Prozac). Your doctor can provide you with a list of foods and medications to avoid in order to prevent this reaction. You will have to check with your doctor before taking any other medicines, whether they are prescribed or can be bought without a prescription. You must also continue to avoid these problem foods and medicines for two weeks after you stop this medication in order to avoid this reaction. The signs that this reaction is occurring include: severe headache, neck stiffness, flushed skin, vomiting, confusion, and fainting. **You should seek emergency medical assistance immediately if these signs occur.** If the reaction described above occurs, stop taking the medication until your doctor can advise you.

If you decide to stop taking any of these medications, speak with your doctor first. Stopping any of these medications suddenly may cause problems.

If you forget to take a dose of Nardil or Parnate, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction. Use the Emsam Patch exactly as prescribed by your healthcare professional. Do not stop or change treatment with the Emsam Patch without talking to your healthcare professional. Use only 1 patch at a time. Do not cut the patch into smaller portions. Avoid exposing the Emsam Patch application site to external sources of direct heat, such as heating pads, electric blankets, heat lamps, saunas, hot tubs, heated water beds, and prolonged direct sunlight.

When used to treat depression in people that have a bipolar illness (manic depressive illness) all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

### **Children and adolescents:**

*Phenelzine* has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in people 16 years and older. *Selegiline Patch* has been approved by the (FDA) for use in people 18 years and older. *Tranylcypromine* is only approved for use in adults.

### **Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and /or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients.

**MAOI (Mono-amine oxidase inhibitor) Antidepressants (con't)**

Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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**Some Foods to avoid while taking an MAOI:**

Pickled or smoked food, including fish, salami, pepperoni; aged cheeses (not cottage or cream cheese), yogurt, beer and wine, fava beans, excessive chocolate or caffeine

Do not consume these foods and beverages for 2 weeks after stopping EMSAM 9 mg/24 hour or 12 mg/24 hour patch.

***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in eye pressure.

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### **SSRI (Selective Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors) Antidepressants**

**citalopram (brand name Celexa)  
escitalopram (brand name Lexapro)  
fluoxetine (brand name Prozac)  
fluvoxamine (brand name Luvox).  
paroxetine (brand name Paxil)  
sertraline (brand name Zoloft)**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression, such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone.

This medication may also be used to treat some forms of anxiety, such as obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic attacks, or unreasonable fears (phobias).

You should understand that all antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks or more.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Trouble sleeping, Anxiety, Nervousness or restlessness, Nausea, Decreased appetite or weight loss, Potential weight gain, Decreased sexual arousal or decreased ability to have an orgasm or ejaculation, Headache, Diarrhea, Drowsiness,\* Unusual dreams

#### **Less common:**

Tiredness, Dizziness, Constipation, Decreased concentration, Fast or uneven heartbeat, Dry mouth, Stuffy nose, Vomiting, Tremors,\* Twitching muscles, Sweating, Seizures\*

## **SSRI (Selective Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors) Antidepressants (con't)**

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

Paroxetine increases the risk for congenital malformations, particularly those of a cardiac nature, when it is taken by women during the first trimester of pregnancy. The effects of the other SSRIs during pregnancy are not completely known. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation, could make it dangerous to drive a car or operate machinery. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you should choose to stop this medication, it is best to talk to your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your physician, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

When used to treat depression in people that have a bipolar illness (manic depressive illness) all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

### **Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved most of these medications for use in children. *Sertraline* is approved for ages 6-17 for the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder. Fluoxetine has been used in people over age 7 for the treatment of depression.

### **Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and/or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders. The FDA advises that patients taking these medications be closely monitored by their doctors, especially at the beginning of treatment and with each increase in dose.

The FDA also urges that existing treatment not be interrupted or stopped without talking with a doctor.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**SSRI (Selective Serotonin Re-uptake Inhibitors) Antidepressants (con't)**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

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Please read the DISCLAIMER carefully before using the Manual.*

### **Tricyclic Antidepressants**

**amitriptyline (brand name Elavil)  
amoxapine (brand name Ascendin)  
clomipramine (brand name Anafranil)  
desipramine (brand name Norpramin)  
doxepin (brand name Sinequan)  
imipramine (brand name Tofranil)  
nortriptyline (brand name Pamelor)  
protriptyline (brand name Vivactil)  
trimipramine (brand name Surmontil).**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression, such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone.

You should understand that all antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks or more.

This medication may also be used to reduce anxiety, panic attacks, or unreasonable fears (phobias) or obsessions.

### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

### **Relatively common:**

Drowsiness,\* Dizziness or lightheadedness (especially when getting up suddenly from a lying or sitting position), Low blood pressure, Constipation, Dry mouth, Blurry vision, Weight gain, Upset stomach

### **Less common:**

Confusion, Difficulty passing urine, Unusually fast or uneven heartbeat, Decreases in sexual drive or function

## ***Tricyclic Antidepressants (con't)***

### **Rare:**

Seizures,\* Liver problems, Worsening of glaucoma\* (if this were to happen you would get severe eye pain, and you would need medical help)

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

When used to treat depression in people that have a bipolar illness (manic depressive illness) all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

### **Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved these medications for use in people younger than 18 years old, although some of these medications have been used in children. *Amitriptyline*, *desipramine*, *imipramine*, and *nortriptyline* have been used in children over the age of 6 years for major depressive illness. *Desipramine*, *imipramine*, and *protriptyline* have been used to treat attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in some children aged 6 and older. *Clomipramine* is used for the treatment of obsessive-compulsive disorder in children age 10 and older. In this age group there have been rare instances of sudden death that appears related to these medications. Your prescriber may ask to test your heart function (EKG) prior to starting medication and routinely thereafter.

### **Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and /or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders. The FDA advises that patients taking these medications be closely monitored by their doctors, especially at the beginning of treatment and with each increase in dose.

*Tricyclic Antidepressants (con't)*

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in eye pressure.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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*Consult your healthcare professional before using this drug.*

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### ***Bupropion (brand name Wellbutrin, Alpenzin)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression, such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone. You should understand that all antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks (4-6weeks) or more.

This medication is also used sometimes to help people stop smoking. Please inform your health care team if you are receiving *Zyban* (bupropion), which is the same active ingredient as *Wellbutrin*.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dry mouth, Problems with sleep, Restlessness, Anxiety, Weight loss, Decreased appetite, Nausea, Dizziness

#### **Less common:**

Confusion, Muscle spasms, Agitation, Upset stomach, Rash, Hallucinations  
Seizures\*: The chance of having a seizure is quite low, but still somewhat higher with this medication than with other antidepressants. The chances increase as the dosage goes up, but it is considered safe up to a total daily dose of 450 mg (400 mg for *Wellbutrin SR*). If you are taking the regular tablet form (*Wellbutrin*), each separate time you take this medication the amount should be as directed, but not more than 150 mg. It is important to take each dose at least six hours apart, and not to take two doses together to avoid the potential risk of a seizure. If you are taking the sustained release form (*Wellbutrin SR*), each separate time you take this medication the amount should be as directed, but not more than 200 mg. You should take each dose as close to 12 hours apart as possible.

If you have an active seizure disorder or an eating disorder, your risk of seizures may be even greater and this medication may not be a good choice for you. Please inform your healthcare team if this applies to you.

## ***Bupropion (brand name Wellbutrin) (con't)***

### **Allergic Reaction**

One or a combination of the following symptoms, itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided. When used to treat depression in people that have a bipolar illness (manic depressive illness) all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

### **Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

### **Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and /or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders. The FDA advises that people taking these medications be closely monitored by their doctors, especially at the beginning of treatment and with each increase in dose.

***Bupropion (brand name Wellbutrin) (con't)***

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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***Glossary Definitions***

**\*Seizures:** Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Mirtazapine (brand name Remeron)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression, such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone.

You should understand that all antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks or more.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Sedation, Drowsiness,\* Increased appetite and weight gain, Dizziness or lightheadedness (especially when getting up suddenly from a lying or sitting position), Dry mouth, Blurry vision, Upset stomach

#### **Less common:**

Confusion, Fast or uneven heartbeat, Changes in sexual drive or function, Liver test problems, Headache, Low blood pressure

#### **Rare:**

Low white blood cell count, seizures\*

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be avoided until more information is known about its effects.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

**Mirtazapine (brand name Remeron) (con't)**

If you should choose to stop this medication it is best to talk to your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your physician, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

When used to treat depression in people that have a bipolar illness (manic depressive illness) all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in children.

**Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and /or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders. The FDA advises that people taking these medications be closely monitored by their doctors, especially at the beginning of treatment and with each increase in dose.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Nefazodone (brand name Serzone)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone.

You should understand that all antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks or more.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Drowsiness,\* Nausea, Constipation, Dry mouth.

#### **Less common:**

Confusion, Agitation, Blurry vision, Unusual dreams, Weight loss, Decreased concentration, Fast, slow or uneven heartbeat, Vomiting, Tremors,\* Dizziness or lightheadedness (especially when getting up suddenly from a lying or sitting position), Low blood pressure, Sweating, Headache, Diarrhea, Trouble sleeping, Nervousness

#### **Allergic Reaction:**

One or a combination of the following symptoms: itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

**\*\*Though rare, cases of life-threatening liver failure have been reported in people treated with Nefazodone (Serzone). Please inform your healthcare team immediately if you develop weakness, dark colored urine, or jaundice (yellow-looking skin).**

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

When used to treat depression in people that have a bipolar illness (manic depressive illness) all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and /or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders. The FDA advises that people taking these medications be closely monitored by their doctors, especially at the beginning of treatment and with each increase in dose.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

***Nefazodone (brand name Serzone) (con't)***

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Tremors: Shakes

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Trazodone (brand name Desyrel)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression, such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone.

All antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks or more.

This medication is also commonly used to help people sleep.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Drowsiness\*

#### **Less common:**

Tiredness, Weakness, Confusion, Agitation, Constipation, Dry mouth, Blurry vision, Unusual dreams, Weight loss, Decreased concentration, Fast, slow or uneven heartbeat, Stuffy nose, Nausea, Vomiting, Tremors,\* Sweating, Headache, Diarrhea, Trouble sleeping, Nervousness, Dizziness or lightheadedness (especially when getting up suddenly from a lying or sitting position), Low blood pressure

Priapism, a prolonged, painful erection of the penis, is a rare side effect of *trazodone*. It can be serious and requires immediate medical attention.

#### **Allergic Reaction**

One or a combination of the following symptoms, itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

When used to treat depression in people with a bipolar illness (manic depressive illness), all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and /or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders. The FDA advises that people taking these medications be closely monitored by their doctors, especially at the beginning of treatment and with each increase in dose.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

*Trazodone (brand name Desyrel) (con't)*

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Tremors: Shakes

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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**Venlafaxine (brand name Effexor)**

**Desvenlafaxine (brand name Pristiq)**

**Duloxetine (brand name Cymbalta)**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one of a number of medications called antidepressants. It is most often used to relieve symptoms of depression, such as seeing only the worst side of things, feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, worthlessness, sadness, fatigue or loss of your normal energy, loss of interest, changes in sleep, changes in appetite or eating habits, difficulty making decisions, decreased alertness or ability to concentrate, irritability, excessive worry or guilt, and thoughts of harming oneself. This medication may also help prevent the symptoms of depression from returning once they are gone.

All antidepressant medications take some amount of time to work, usually several weeks or more.

### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

### **Relatively common:**

Trouble sleeping, Headache, Anxiety, Nervousness or restlessness, Increase in blood pressure, Nausea, Diarrhea, Drowsiness, \* Decreased appetite or weight loss, Decreased sexual drive or ability, Sweating

### **Less common:**

Tiredness, Dizziness, Unusual dreams, Constipation, Decreased concentration, Fast or uneven heartbeat, Dry mouth, Blurry vision, Vomiting, Tremors, \* Seizures\*

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation, could make it dangerous to drive a car or operate machinery. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

***Venlafaxine (brand name Effexor) (con't)***

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

When used to treat depression in people with bipolar illness (manic depressive illness), all antidepressant medications have a risk of causing a manic episode.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Suicidality**

People with major depressive disorder (MDD), both adult and pediatric, may experience worsening of their depression and /or the emergence of suicidal ideation and behavior (suicidality) or unusual changes in behavior, whether or not they are taking antidepressant medications, and this risk may persist until significant remission occurs. There has been a long-standing concern that antidepressants may have a role in inducing worsening of depression and the emergence of suicidality in certain patients. Antidepressants increased the risk of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in short-term studies in children and adolescents with Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders. The FDA advises that people taking these medications be closely monitored by their doctors, especially at the beginning of treatment and with each increase in dose.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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*Venlafaxine (brand name Effexor) (con't)*

**Special Instructions:**

**Please inform your physician if you are being treated for high blood pressure (hypertension)** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

### **III. ANTIPSYCHOTIC MEDICATIONS**

**\*PLEASE SEE Page 135  
For Information re:**

**The Current State of Knowledge about  
Antipsychotic Effectiveness**

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Antipsychotic Medications (older agents)**

**chlorpromazine (brand name Thorazine)**

**fluphenazine (brand name Prolixin or Prolixin Decanoate [injectable form of fluphenazine])**

**haloperidol (brand name Haldol or Haldol Decanoate [injectable form of haloperidol])**

**loxapine (brand name Loxitane)**

**molindone (brand name Moban)**

**perphenazine (brand name Trilafon)**

**\*thioridazine (brand name Mellaril) (see page 43)**

**thiothixene (brand name Navane)**

**trifluoperazine (brand name Stelazine)**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is called an antipsychotic medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder. These problems may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved.

### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

### **FDA Warning:**

FDA issued a warning of an increased risk of death associated with the antipsychotic medications used in elderly patients treated for dementia-related psychosis, symptoms include: poor memory, inability to recognize familiar objects, sounds or people.

### **Relatively common:**

Sedation, Muscle stiffness, Tremors,\* Slowed muscle movements, Muscle spasms, Restlessness, Dizziness, Constipation, Dry mouth, Blurry vision, Weight gain, Upset stomach, Body heat regulation problems. Some patients taking these medications may experience trouble staying cool in hot weather. This can be dangerous during heat waves or excessive physical activity. Be sure to drink plenty of fluids, such as water, and stay in cooler areas.

## ***Antipsychotic Medications (older agents) (con't)***

### **Less common:**

Stuffy nose, Difficulty passing urine, Low blood pressure, Unusually fast or uneven heartbeat, Impotence, \* Breast enlargement, Loss of menstrual cycle, Sensitivity to the sun, Difficulty swallowing, Seizures\*

### ***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. Often these movements are in your tongue, mouth and face, but they can happen in other parts of your body, like your arms or legs, or even rarely in the muscles that help you breathe. You may not notice these movements, although others around you may notice them. You should also understand that these movements might not go away even if the medication is stopped. The risk for this side effect increases the longer you are treated with an antipsychotic medication and the older you are.

### ***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

***Haloperidol Decanoate Injection:*** This medication is injected into a muscle (IM). This medication is the long-acting form of haloperidol and is usually administered once every 4 weeks. This medication must be used as prescribed. Do not stop using this drug suddenly without consulting your doctor. Skin irritation, redness, swelling and pain at the injection site may occur.

***Fluphenazine Decanoate Injection:*** This medication is injected into a muscle (IM) or under the skin (SC). This medication must be used as prescribed, every 1-4 weeks as needed or tolerated. Do not stop using this drug suddenly without consulting your doctor. Some conditions may worsen if the medication is suddenly stopped. It may take up to two weeks for the full benefit of this drug to take effect. Skin irritation, redness, swelling and pain at the injection site may occur.

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

## ***Antipsychotic Medications (older agents) (con't)***

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

### **Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved some of the antipsychotic medications for use in people younger than 18 years old. *Chlorpromazine* is approved for 6 months and older (the manufacturer recommends that the medication generally not be used in these children unless the condition to be treated is potentially life-threatening), *haloperidol* for 3 years and older (except for *haloperidol decanoate*, an injectable form used with adults), *trifluoperazine* for 6 years and older, *fluphenazine* for 12 years and older, *molindone* for 12 years and older, *thiothixene* for 12 years and older, and *loxapine* for 16 years and older.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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### ***Glossary Definitions***

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Impotence: Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### Thioridazine (brand name Mellaril)

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is called an antipsychotic medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder. These problems may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

- ***Mesoridazine and Thioridazine are indicated for patients with schizophrenia, who either cannot tolerate other antipsychotic drugs or fail to respond to them. Your doctor may ask for an ECG (heart monitor test) to ensure proper heart function.***

#### **Relatively common:**

Sedation, Muscle stiffness, Tremors,\* Slowed muscle movements, Muscle spasms, Restlessness, Dizziness, Constipation, Dry mouth, Blurry vision, Weight gain, Upset stomach

#### **Less common:**

Stuffy nose, Difficulty passing urine, Low blood pressure, Unusually fast or uneven heartbeat, Impotence,\* Breast enlargement, Loss of menstrual cycle, Sensitivity to the sun, Difficulty swallowing, Seizures\*

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. Often these movements are in your tongue, mouth and face, but they can happen in other parts of your body like your arms or legs, or even rarely in the muscles that help you breathe. You may not notice these movements, although others around you may notice them. You should also understand that these movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped. The risk for this side effect increases the longer you are treated with an antipsychotic medication and the older you are.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved some of the antipsychotic medications for use in people younger than 18 years old. *Thioridazine* is approved for 2 years and older and *mesoridazine* for 12 years and older.

**If you are receiving propranolol (Inderal), fluvoxamine (Luvox) or fluoxetine (Prozac), please check with your doctor.**

*Thioridazine (brand name Mellaril) (con't)*

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Impotence: Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

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### ***Aripiprazole (brand name Abilify)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Aripiprazole* is an antipsychotic medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, depression, and bipolar disorder. Symptoms treated may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Constipation, Headache, Nausea, Vomiting, Nervousness, Rash, Sleepiness, Weight gain, Lightheadedness, Sleeplessness, Restlessness, Need to keep moving

***Weight gain:*** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

***Diabetes:*** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

***Aripiprazole (brand name Abilify) (con't)***

**Less common:**

Convulsions, Difficulty breathing, Fast heartbeat, High fever, High or low blood pressure, Increased sweating, Muscle spasm, Muscle stiffness, Sudden loss of consciousness, Unusually pale skin

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect, speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

You may get overheated more easily while you are using this medicine. Be careful if you exercise heavily or are in high heat or humidity. Drink plenty of water every day.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

***Aripiprazole (brand name Abilify) (con't)***

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved this medication for use in adolescents (13-17) for the treatment of schizophrenia. Aripiprazole is also indicated for children ages 10-17 with acute manic or mixed episodes associated with Bipolar I disorder.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Asenapine (brand name Saphris)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used to control the symptoms of Schizophrenia and certain types of Bipolar Disorder. Asenapine is used to treat the acute symptoms associated with Schizophrenia, and the acute manic or mixed episodes associated with Bipolar Disorder; it is not currently approved for long-term treatment.

Asenapine will help control the symptoms such as hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

#### **Taking this medication:**

Asenapine is a sublingual tablet that dissolves rapidly in saliva. It should NOT be swallowed, crushed or chewed.

Make sure the hands are dry when handling the tablet.

Place the tablet under the tongue and allow the tablet to dissolve completely.

Avoid eating or drinking anything for about ten minutes after taking this medication.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. This list may not include all possible effects if you have a concern about something you notice while taking this medication, talk to your doctor.

#### **Relatively common:**

Weight gain	Increase blood pressure (Hypertension)
Insomnia	Restlessness of the legs or arms
Dizziness	Somnolence*
Sweating	Changes in taste
Dizziness on changing positions	

#### **Less common:**

Thoughts of suicide	Fainting
Increase risk of stroke	Problems with movement
Increases in blood sugar or diabetes	
Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome <sup>1</sup>	

1. This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

It is important to report any side effects to your doctor or nurse practitioner and talk to them about any medical conditions you may have before starting this or any medication

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect, speak with your healthcare provider.

**Risks in pregnancy and breast feeding:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk to the fetus, it is important to discuss options and birth control possibilities with your physician. You and your doctor should discuss what options are available if you do intend to become pregnant. If you believe you may be pregnant already, you should also talk to your doctor.

Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

As with any medication do not operate a car or other machinery until you are aware of how this medication will make you feel.

Speak with your doctor about starting an exercise program.

Using other medications, illicit drugs, or alcohol with this medication can enhance the sedation or cause other unwanted effects and should be avoided.

Tell your doctor you are taking Saphris before you start any other new medications because there is a risk of interactions.

Talk to your doctor about any problems with movement, unintended tremor\* or physical discomfort. This will help prevent possible long term side effects.

In elderly patients there is an increased risk of death associated with dementia related psychoses. This medication is not indicated for the treatment of dementia. Close monitoring of patients is essential when you start taking this medication. It is important to tell your physician about any heart problems that you may have as this medication could worsen these conditions. If you experience any side effects associated with this medication it is important to notify your prescriber as soon as possible. The FDA advises monitoring of patients closely during initiation and dose changes associated with this medication.

**Missing a dose or stopping treatment:**

If you forget to take a dose of your medication, take it as soon as you realize you missed it. Do not take double the dose. If the time for your next dose is near, skip the missed dose, take the next dose and continue your normal dosing pattern. If you are concerned contact your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for instructions.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Suicidality**

One of the problems associated with both the disease and these types of medications is the chance of suicidal thoughts or actions. It is important that you contact your doctor or other health care provider immediately if you notice unpleasant or unusual changes in behavior, increased thoughts of harming yourself or others or any actions that do not seem normal. This type of medication can initially worsen the feelings of depression. These feelings will improve after a short time into the treatment.

**Be sure to tell your provider what other medications, birth control, vitamins, over the counter medications (like Tylenol, Advil) or herbal supplements you are taking because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about: Inform your doctor if you are taking, starting or stopping fluvoxamine as these can cause a change in your medication.**

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**Special Instructions:**

**Please inform your physician if you are being treated for high blood pressure (hypertension).**

**Inform your doctor about any liver issues you may have.**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Tremors: Shakes

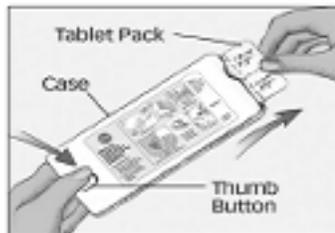
\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\* Somnolence: Feeling tired and mental slowness (feeling foggy).

## 17.1 Tablet Administration

### IMPORTANT:

- Do not remove tablet until ready to administer.
- Use dry hands when handling tablet.



**Step 1.** Firmly press and hold thumb button, then pull out tablet pack.  
**Do not push tablet through tablet pack.**  
**Do not cut or tear tablet pack.**



**Step 2.** Peel back colored tab.



**Step 3.** Gently remove tablet.  
**Do not crush tablet.**



**Step 4.** Place tablet **under** tongue and allow it to dissolve completely.



**Do not chew or swallow tablet.**  
**Do not eat or drink for 10 minutes.**



**Step 5.** Slide tablet pack into case until it clicks.

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### ***Clozapine (brand name Clozaril)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Clozapine* is an antipsychotic medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder. These problems may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Weight gain, Sedation, Drooling or increased salivation, Increases in blood fats, Fast heart beat, Dizziness, Low blood pressure, Nausea, Constipation, Blurry vision, Restlessness, Liver test problems, Blood sugar problems, Seizures\*

The ‘newer’ antipsychotics, such as Clozapine, also called ‘second-generation’, while less likely to cause serious long-term neurological side-effects like tardive dyskinesia, cause serious metabolic side-effects, including obesity and diabetes.

#### **Less common:**

Dry mouth, Night-time loss of bladder control, Problems with swallowing or choking, Changes in heart rhythm, Muscle twitching, Fever, Heart membrane inflammation, Blood clots, particularly in the legs

#### **Low white blood cell count:**

This means a drop in the number of infection-fighting cells in your blood. It happens to about 1 in 100 people (1%) treated with *clozapine*, and most often in the first six months of treatment. This can be very serious, and possibly fatal, especially if it is not found quickly. In most cases, once this side effect is found and *clozapine* is stopped, the white blood cells return to normal levels. **In order to check for this problem you will be required to have a blood test every week for at least the first six months of treatment , then every two weeks for the next six months and then every 4 weeks**

**if your blood counts remain stable.** You should also know that a sore throat, a fever, or flu symptoms could be a signal of this problem, and you need to tell your doctor. If this problem happens, you would not be able to take *Clozapine* again.

***Weight gain*** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

***Diabetes*** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

**Cardiac-** Clozapine has been associated with rare cases of myocarditis (inflammation of the area around the heart). Notify your doctor immediately if you experience any unusual chest pain, fever, shortness of breath, or a rapid heart beat.

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect, speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not well known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

If you develop flu-like symptoms, tightness in the chest, and/or difficulty breathing, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

If you develop leg pain, it may be a sign of a problem with blood clotting which is potentially serious. Contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

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### ***Iloperidone (brand name Fanapt)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used to control the symptoms of schizophrenia. Iloperidone is used to treat the acute symptoms associated with schizophrenia; it is not currently approved for long-term treatment. Iloperidone has been shown to improve symptoms including hallucinations (seeing, feeling or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief in something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve your of feelings suspicion or paranoia and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, problems with concentration and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people and a lack of interest in participating in programs, school or at work. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

This medication has been shown, after a goal dose is achieved, to control the symptoms of schizophrenia; however, symptom improvement may not be seen for several weeks. The medication dose must be adjusted slowly to avoid the risk of blood pressure changes causing fainting when standing up (orthostatic hypotension). To avoid this make sure that you take this medication as your doctor prescribes it.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. This list may not include all possible effects, if you have a concern about something you notice while taking this medication, talk to your doctor.

#### **Relatively common:**

Weight gain	Dizziness on changing position
Diarrhea	Nausea
Dry mouth	Somnolence*
Dizziness	Fatigue
Racing Pulse	Breast enlargement in men and women
Sweating	Lack of menstruation in women

#### **Less common:**

Thoughts of suicide	Changes in heart beat
Increase risk of stroke	Fainting
Problems with movement	Increases in blood sugar or diabetes
Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome	

## ***Iloperidone (brand name Fanapt) (con't)***

### ***Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, though, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

### ***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect, speak with your healthcare provider.

It is important to report any side effects to your doctor or nurse practitioner and talk to them about any medical conditions you may have before starting this or any medication

### **Risks in pregnancy and breast-feeding:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it to a fetus, it is important to discuss options and birth control possibilities with your physician. You and your doctor should discuss what options are available if you do intend to become pregnant. If you believe you may be pregnant already, you should also talk to your doctor.

Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

### **Other risks:**

As with any medication do not operate a car or other machinery until you are aware of how this medication will make you feel.

Using other medications, illegal drugs, or alcohol with this medication can enhance the sedation or cause other unwanted effects and are should be avoided.

Tell your doctor you are taking Fanapt before you start any other new medications because there is a risk of interactions.

Talk to your doctor about any problems with movement, unintended tremor\*, or physical discomfort as soon as you notice it, this will help prevent possible long-term side effects.

In elderly patients there is an increased risk of death associated with dementia related psychoses. This medication is not indicated for the treatment of dementia. Close monitoring of patients is essential when you start taking this medication. It is important to tell your physician about any heart problems that you may have as this medication could worsen these conditions. If you experience any side effects associated with this medication it is important to notify your prescriber as soon as possible. The FDA advises monitoring of patients closely during initiation and dose changes associated with this medication.

**Missing a dose or stopping treatment:**

**If you forget to take a dose of your medication, take it as soon as you realize you missed it. Do not take double the dose. If your next dose is soon after take that dose and continue your normal dosing pattern. If you are concerned contact your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for instructions.**

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Suicidality**

One of the problems associated with both the disease and these types of medications is the chance of suicidal thoughts or actions. It is important that you contact your doctor or other health care provider immediately if you notice unpleasant or unusual changes in behavior, increased thoughts of harming yourself or others or any actions that do not seem normal. This type of medication can initially worsen the feelings of depression. These feelings will improve after a short time into the treatment.

**Be sure to tell your provider what other medications, birth control, vitamins, over the counter medications (like Tylenol, Advil) or herbal supplements you are taking because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about: Inform your doctor if you are taking, starting or stopping fluoxetine (Prozac), Paroxetine (Paxil) or antibiotics as these can cause a change in your medication.**

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**Special Instructions:**

**Please inform your physician if you are being treated for high blood pressure (hypertension).**

**Inform your doctor about any liver issues you may have.**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\* Somnolence: Feeling tired and mental slowness (feeling foggy).

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Olanzapine (brand name Zyprexa)***

### ***Olanzapine Injectable (brand name Zyprexa Injectable)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Olanzapine* is an antipsychotic and a mood stabilizing medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder, including bipolar disorder. These problems may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

The injectable form of this drug is injected into the muscle only (IM). It is used to treat severe agitation. It is recommended that dosing should be every 2-4 hours and not to go beyond 30 mg in 24 hours. This drug is short-acting (effects do not last for a very long time) and is meant for short-term control of agitation. Oral *olanzapine* is preferred for maintenance treatment.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Weight gain, Sedation, Agitation, Dizziness, Constipation, Dry mouth, Restlessness, Liver test problems, and Blood sugar problems. Injection site redness, swelling and pain may be experienced with the injectable form of *olanzapine*. Low blood pressure may be a problem in some patients receiving the injectable form of *olanzapine*.

The ‘newer’ antipsychotics, such as Olanzapine, also called ‘second-generation’, while less likely to cause serious long-term neurological side-effects like tardive dyskinesia, cause serious metabolic side-effects, including obesity and diabetes.

***Weight gain*** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having

problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

**Diabetes** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

**Less common:**

Seizures,\* Difficulty swallowing, Muscle stiffness, Tremors,\* Slowed muscle movements, Muscle spasms, Changes in body temperature (too hot or too cold), worsening of glaucoma\* (if this were to happen you would get severe eye pain, and you would need medical help)

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not well known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

**Olanzapine (brand name Zyprexa) (con't)**

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in eye pressure.

\*Tremors: Shakes

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### ***Olanzapine Long acting Injectable (brand name Zyprexa Relprevv)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

Olanzapine Relprevv is an intramuscular long acting form of Olanzapine (Zyprexa) and is used to treat schizophrenia. It is used after you are on a stable medication regimen of the daily tablets. This medication replaces your daily dose and must be administered by your health care provider. It is administered as an intramuscular injection in the buttock and the medication slowly is absorbed into your body over the next two weeks or four weeks depending on which formulation your physician prefers. There is a loading dose that must be given to ensure that there is an adequate level of medication in your body.

Olanzapine has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia. These symptoms may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, problems with concentration and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people and a lack of interest in participating in programs, school or at work. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. This list may not include all possible effects if you have a concern about something you notice while taking this medication, talk to your doctor.

#### **Relatively common:**

Weight gain	Sedation
Agitation	Dizziness
Constipation	Dry mouth
Restlessness	Liver test problems,
Blood sugar problems.	

The injectable products could have the possible following effects:

Injection site redness	Swelling
Pain	Low blood pressure

The 'newer' antipsychotics, such as Olanzapine, also called 'second-generation', while less likely to cause serious long-term neurological side-effects like tardive dyskinesia, cause serious metabolic side-effects, including obesity and diabetes.

**Weight gain** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

**Diabetes** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

**Less common:**

Seizures*	Difficulty swallowing
Muscle stiffness	Tremors*
Slowed muscle movements,	Muscle spasms
Changes in body temperature (too hot or too cold)	
Worsening of glaucoma* (if this were to happen you would get severe eye pain, and you would need medical help)	

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

After administration of the Relprevv product your physician must monitor you for several hours. There is a rare risk that you could experience symptoms are the same as if there you had taken too much olanzapine. These include sedation\*, dizziness, weakness, agitation, slurred speech and changes in your ability to move including discoordination, changes in your ability to walk and stand. Your physician should monitor you for several hours which is when this reaction is likely to occur but it is important to know

your body and report any abnormal symptoms. You may be sore after the injection, however it is important not to rub the injection site or to expose it to excessive heat.

It is important to report any side effects to your doctor or nurse practitioner and talk to them about any medical conditions you may have before starting this or any medication

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to discuss options and birth control possibilities with your physician. You and your doctor should discuss what options are available if you do intend to become pregnant. If you believe you may be pregnant already, you should also talk to your doctor.

Breastfeeding while taking this medication should also be discussed with your doctor because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

In elderly patients there is an increased risk of death associated with dementia related psychoses. This medication is not indicated for the treatment of dementia. Close monitoring of patients is essential when you start taking this medication. It is important to tell your physician about any heart problems that you may have as this medication could worsen these conditions. If you experience any side effects associated with this medication it is important to notify your prescriber as soon as possible. The FDA advises monitoring of patients closely during initiation and dose changes associated with this medication.

It is important to stick to your dosing regimen to adequately control your symptoms. If you have concerns about missing doses or not being able to adhere to your dosing regimen speak to your physician.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider what other medications, birth control, vitamins, over the counter medications (like Tylenol, Advil) or herbal supplements you are taking because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in eye pressure.

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Sedation: Sleep

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### **Paliperidone (brand name Invega)**

### **Paliperidone Palmitate (brand name Invega Sustenna)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Paliperidone* is an antipsychotic medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia. These problems may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are often referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

The Injection form is indicated for acute and maintenance treatment of Schizophrenia. It is a once monthly injection that slowly releases drug for the entire 4 weeks. The Sustenna injection is indicated for treatment after you are on a stable oral daily dose. The medication is administered as an injection into either the deltoid muscle (upper arm) or in the gluteus (buttock). It is used to treat the same symptoms as those listed above. The Sustenna form should not be taken with the oral tablets unless specifically instructed by your physician. It should replace your current daily dose.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. This list may not include all possible effects if you have a concern about something you notice while taking this medication, talk to your doctor.

#### **Relatively common:**

Problems with sleep	Sedation
Agitation	Nervousness or anxiety
Muscle stiffness	Tremors*
Slowed muscle movements	Muscle spasms
Restlessness	Dizziness

The ‘newer’ antipsychotics, such as Paliperidone, also called ‘second-generation’, while less likely to cause serious long-term neurological side-effects like tardive dyskinesia, cause serious metabolic side-effects, including obesity and diabetes.

**Weight gain** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

**Diabetes** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

**Less common:**

Stuffy nose, Head ache, Constipation, Dry mouth, Weight gain, Low blood pressure, Impotence,\* Decreased sexual arousal or decreased ability to have an orgasm or ejaculation, Breast enlargement, Loss of menstrual cycle, Seizures

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not well known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or operate machinery. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**For the Sustenna product it is very important you see your health care provider on schedule to receive your dose, as you should. Maintenance therapy needs to have a constant dosing schedule.**

In elderly patients there is an increased risk of death associated with dementia related psychoses. This medication is not indicated for the treatment of dementia. Close monitoring of patients is essential when you start taking this medication. It is important to tell your physician about any heart problems that you may have as this medication could worsen these conditions. If you experience any side effects associated with this medication it is important to notify your prescriber as soon as possible. The FDA advises monitoring of patients closely during initiation and dose changes associated with this medication.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider what other medications, birth control, vitamins, over the counter medications (like Tylenol, Advil) or herbal supplements you are taking because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Impotence: Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

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### **Quetiapine (brand name Seroquel) Quetiapine XR (brand name Seroquel XR)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Quetiapine* and *Quetiapine XR* are antipsychotic medications. *Quetiapine XR* is indicated for acute and maintenance treatment of schizophrenia, acute treatment of depressive episodes associated with bipolar disorder, and maintenance therapy of bipolar disorder as an adjunctive therapy. *Quetiapine* has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder, including bipolar depression. Some of the problems which may occur with schizophrenia may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dizziness, Low blood pressure when you stand up quickly, Dry mouth, Stomach upset, Sleepiness, Headache, Constipation, Weight gain, Liver test problems (these usually return to normal on their own), Increased blood fat levels

The ‘newer’ antipsychotics, such as Quetiapine and Quetiapine XR, also called ‘second-generation’, while less likely to cause serious long-term neurological side-effects like tardive dyskinesia, cause serious metabolic side-effects, including obesity and diabetes.

**Weight gain** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

**Diabetes** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

**Less common:**

Muscle stiffness, Tremors,\* Slowed muscle movements, Muscle spasms, Restlessness, Seizures,\* Decreased thyroid levels, Fast heart beat

***Cataracts:***

A cataract occurs when the lens of your eye becomes cloudy. This can lead to decreased vision and in some cases even blindness. When *quetiapine* was tested in laboratory animals, some of them developed cataracts. Some people who have taken *quetiapine* in long-term studies also had changes in their eye lenses. It is not yet known how often this side effect will occur with *quetiapine* or how serious it will be, but your doctor may ask you to have an eye exam to check for this problem before starting *quetiapine* and periodically thereafter.

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually, it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect, speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The safety and effectiveness of *quetiapine* and *quetiapine XR* has not been determined or approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

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### ***Risperidone (brand name Risperdal or Risperdal-M) Risperidone Injection (brand name Risperdal Consta)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Risperidone* is an antipsychotic medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and autism. These problems may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

*Risperidone Injection* is given by intramuscular injection (IM) into the buttock by a healthcare professional once every two weeks. Injections should alternate between the two buttocks. Injected *risperidone* may take up to three weeks to begin working. During this time, you should still take the oral form of this drug or another medication for your condition by mouth. After three weeks, your doctor should have you stop taking the oral form, but follow the directions provided. The dosage is based on your medical condition and response to therapy. Continue to take this medication as directed, even if you are feeling better and thinking more clearly.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Problems with sleeping, Sedation, Agitation, Nervousness or anxiety, Muscle stiffness, Tremors,\* and Slowed muscle movements, Muscle spasms, Restlessness, Dizziness

The ‘newer’ antipsychotics, such as Risperidone, also called ‘second-generation’, while less likely to cause serious long-term neurological side-effects like tardive dyskinesia, cause serious metabolic side-effects, including obesity and diabetes.

***Weight gain*** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having

problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

**Diabetes** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

**Injection-** redness, swelling, and pain at the injection site may occur.

**Less common:**

Stuffy nose, Head ache, Constipation, Dry mouth, Weight gain, Low blood pressure, Impotence,\* Decreased sexual arousal or decreased ability to have an orgasm or ejaculation, Breast enlargement, Loss of menstrual cycle, Seizures

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not well known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or operate machinery. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

**Children and adolescents:**

Risperidone is indicated for treatment of schizophrenia in adolescents aged 13-17 and for short-term treatment of acute manic or mixed episodes associated with Bipolar I Disorder in children and adolescents aged 10-17 years. It is also indicated for treatment of irritability associated with autistic disorder in children and adolescents aged 5–16 years, including symptoms of aggression towards others, deliberate self-injuriousness, temper tantrums, and quickly changing moods.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Impotence: Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Ziprasidone (brand name Geodon)***

### ***Ziprasidone Injection (brand name Geodon Injectable)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Ziprasidone* is an antipsychotic medication. It has been shown to be helpful in relieving some of the problems that occur in serious mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder. Symptoms treated may include hallucinations (seeing, feeling, or hearing things when no one is there) or delusions (a fixed belief of something that may not be true). These symptoms are referred to as “positive” symptoms. This medicine may also help you to think more clearly so that the things you say are easier for others to understand. It may also help relieve you of feeling suspicious or paranoid, and having beliefs that others find very unlikely or impossible to understand. Racing thoughts, manic behavior, problems with concentration, and excessive anger may also be relieved. This medication may also help with another group of problems that include a lack of motivation to do things that you enjoy, trouble being together with other people, and a lack of interest to participate in programs, school, or work opportunities. These symptoms are referred to as “negative” symptoms.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Drowsiness,\* Fast, slow, irregular or pounding heartbeat, Lightheadedness, Muscle stiffness, Confusion, Diarrhea, Restlessness

#### **Less common:**

Weight gain, Seizures,\* Difficulty swallowing, Changes in body temperature (too hot or too cold), Skin rash

***Diabetes*** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

**History of stroke or heart problems or low mineral/electrolyte levels in your blood, such as magnesium or potassium can result in heart rate changes; therefore your physician may order a simple blood test to monitor these. Your physician may also order an ECG (heart monitor test) to make sure it is normal before you start the medication and periodically thereafter.**

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. Often, these movements occur around the tongue, mouth and face, but they can happen in other parts of your body as well. You may not notice these movements, although others around you may notice them. These movements might not go away even if the medication is stopped. The risk for this side effect increases the longer you are treated with an antipsychotic and the older you are.

The number of people that will get this side effect from *ziprasidone* is relatively low compared to older antipsychotics.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, high fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms, contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not well known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in the breast milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

An **increased risk of stroke** and ministroke has been reported in clinical studies of elderly patients with dementia-related psychosis.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

**furosemide (Lasix), spironolactone (Aldactone), hydrochlorothiazide, ketoconazole (Nizoral), propranolol (Inderal) Other(s):**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

## **IV. MOOD STABILIZATION MEDICATIONS**

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Carbamazepine (brand name Tegretol, Carbatrol and others)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used for a number of different purposes. *Carbamazepine* is commonly used to control certain types of seizures. \* *Carbamazepine* has also been used extensively for bipolar disorder. It may be used to stabilize mood swings (changes in mood in any direction between depressed, normal, or manic) in people that have a bipolar illness or schizoaffective disorder. It is sometimes used to treat impulsive behavior, and other mental illnesses.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dizziness, Drowsiness, \* Staggering, Unsteadiness, Clumsiness, Nausea, Stomach Upset, Diarrhea, Liver test problems

#### **Less Common:**

Confusion, Skin rash, Blurred or double vision, Rapid back and forth eye movements, Unusual bleeding or bruising, Headache, Uneven heartbeat, Low sodium.

#### **Rarely:**

Liver problems, Fever

#### ***Allergic Reaction:***

One or a combination of the following symptoms, itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

**In order to make sure the level of drug in your body is correct, and to reduce the chances of serious side effects, occasional blood tests will be done while you are taking this medication.**

**You should also report to your doctor if you develop a fever, sore throat, mouth sores, or notice that you are bruising easily, have tiny purple skin spots, bloody nose, or dark urine. These might be signs of a problem with your blood and further tests may be needed.**

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known, however some birth defects are believed to be associated with its use. Since there is some risk that it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like drowsiness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

This medication has been approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for use in the treatment of seizures in people 6 years and older.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

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### ***Gabapentin (brand name Neurontin)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is commonly used to control certain types of seizures\* (convulsions). It may also be used to treat bipolar disorder (mood swings), other psychiatric conditions, and to help relieve certain types of nerve pain. Your doctor can explain these other purposes as they apply to you.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Somnolence, Dizziness, Coordination problems, Tiredness, Jerking movements of the eyes, Tremors\*

#### **Less common:**

Double or blurred vision, Nervousness, Problems speaking clearly, Memory problems, Weight gain, Stomach upset, Back pain, Swelling of feet or hands, Muscle twitching, Decreased white blood cell count

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved this medication for use in children 3 years and older for the treatment of seizures.

**Elderly patients and those with kidney problems:**

*Gabapentin* is removed from your body by the kidneys. As people age their kidneys work more slowly. For this reason, the dose of *gabapentin* is adjusted based on how well your kidneys are functioning. A blood test may be needed to test your kidney function.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:  
Do not take antacids within 1-2 hours (Tums, Mylanta, etc.)**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Tremors: Shakes

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### ***Lamotrigine (brand name Lamictal)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is commonly used to control certain types of seizures\* (convulsions). It has also been used to treat other conditions such as bipolar disorder (mood swings) or schizoaffective disorder. Your doctor can explain these other purposes as they apply to you.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dizziness, Blurred or double vision, Headache, Nausea, Vomiting, Sedation, Rash.

#### ***Rash:***

*Lamotrigine* caused a rash in about 1 in every 10 people treated during studies of the medication. Most of these rashes did not cause any apparent harm, but the reaction can be serious.

#### **Less common:**

Diarrhea, Stomach upset, Muscle or joint pain, Trouble sleeping, Tremors\*, Nasal stuffiness, and for females an Increased chance of vaginal infections

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk and may be harmful to your child.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 17 years old. Its use in younger people has been linked to a much more common occurrence of rash which can be severe and possibly life threatening.

**Elderly patients:**

Very few patients over 65 years old were treated with this medication in formal studies. Because of this, the safety and effectiveness of *lamotrigine* in this age group is uncertain.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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This medication interacts with some other medications, especially some of those used to treat bipolar disorder or seizures,\* like Depakote or Tegretol. Be sure to tell your doctor all of the medicines you are taking, although in many cases this may already be known.

**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Tremors: Shakes

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Lithium:***

**Lithium Carbonate (brand name Eskalith, Lithobid, Lithonate and Lithotabs)  
Lithium Citrate Syrup**

### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

*Lithium* is used for a number of different purposes. It may be used to treat bipolar disorder (mood swings) or schizoaffective disorder. It has also been used to treat other conditions, such as depression, impulsive behavior, or to improve treatment of schizophrenia. Your doctor can explain these other purposes as they apply to you.

### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

### **Relatively common:**

Increased thirst, Increased urination, Nausea, Weight gain, Hand tremors,\* Tiredness, Metallic taste, Thyroid problems

### **Less Common:**

Drowsiness,\* Memory problems, Attention or concentration problems, Muscle weakness, Acne

### **Side effects that require immediate medical attention:**

Vomiting, Diarrhea, Tiredness, Severe trembling in arms or legs, Difficulty speaking, slurred speech, Seizures\*

**In order to make sure the level of this medication in your body is correct, and to reduce the chances of serious side effects of long-term use, such as thyroid and kidney function, occasional blood tests will be done while you are taking this medication.**

### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known, however some birth defects are believed to be associated with its use. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like drowsiness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in children younger than 12 years old. However, its use in children younger than 12 years has been published in the medical literature.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions: Taking over-the-counter pain relievers, such as naproxen or ibuprofen (not Tylenol [acetaminophen]) may potentially raise your lithium level. Please discuss this with your healthcare team if long-term use is needed.**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

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### **Olanzapine/Fluoxetine (brand name Symbyax)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is a combination of two drugs, *olanzapine* (an antipsychotic drug) and *fluoxetine* (a selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitor – SSRI antidepressant). It is used to treat a certain type of mental/emotional disorder (depression associated with bipolar disorder and treatment resistant depression). It works by helping to restore the balance of certain natural chemicals in the brain.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Weight gain, Sedation, Agitation, Dizziness, Constipation or diarrhea, Dry mouth, Restlessness, Trouble sleeping, Unusual dreams, Decreased sexual arousal, Liver test problems, and Blood sugar problems.

**Weight gain** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

**Diabetes** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

#### **Less common:**

Seizures,\* Difficulty swallowing, Muscle stiffness, Tremors,\* Slowed muscle movements, Muscle spasms, Changes in body temperature (too hot or too cold), Worsening of glaucoma\* (if this were to happen you would get severe eye pain, and you would need medical help)

Males: In the very unlikely event you have a painful, prolonged erection, stop using this drug and seek immediate medical attention or permanent problems could occur.

***Tardive dyskinesia:***

This side effect can happen to people who take an antipsychotic medication for a long time. Usually it does not appear until after 6 months or more of treatment. It involves uncontrollable and abnormal muscle movements. These movements may not go away even if the medication is stopped.

The risk for developing tardive dyskinesia is substantially less with this medication as compared to older antipsychotics. If you have more questions about this side effect, speak with your healthcare provider.

***Neuroleptic malignant syndrome:***

This is a rare problem that can happen with any antipsychotic medication. People who get this side effect have a change in the way they act, a fever, muscle stiffness, and changes in their blood pressure and heart rate. Although it is rare and most people recover completely, some people have died from this problem. If you develop these symptoms contact your healthcare provider immediately.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not well known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in eye pressure.

\*Tremors: Shakes

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### ***Oxcarbazepine (brand name Trileptal)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is commonly used to treat certain types of seizures\* (convulsions). It has also been used to treat other conditions such as bipolar disorder (mood swings) or facial nerve pain. Your doctor can explain these other purposes as they apply to you.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Somnolence, Dizziness, Fatigue, Nausea, Abnormal vision, Rash, and Acne

#### **Less common:**

Severe skin rashes, Low white blood cell and platelet counts

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will likely be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

#### **Children and adolescents:**

*Oxcarbazepine* is approved by the FDA to treat certain types of seizures\* in children aged 4 and older. Dosing is based on the person's weight.

*Oxcarbazepine (brand name Trileptal) (con't)*

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

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### ***Topiramate (brand name Topamax)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is commonly used to treat certain types of seizures\* (convulsions). It may also be used to treat other conditions such as bipolar disorder (mood swings).

Your doctor can explain these other purposes as they apply to you.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Somnolence, Dizziness, Weight loss, Coordination problems, Tiredness, Jerking movements of the eyes, Nervousness, Difficulty with concentration, Memory and possible speech difficulty

#### **Less common:**

Decrease in urination, Kidney stones, and Secondary angle closure glaucoma.\*

Contact your physician immediately if you experience blurred vision or eye pain.

Symptoms typically occur within the first month of treatment

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will likely be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

*Topiramate* is approved by the FDA to treat certain types of seizures\* in children aged 2 and older. Dosing is based on the person's weight.

**Elderly patients and those with kidney problems:**

*Topiramate* is removed from your body by the kidneys. As people age, their kidneys may work more slowly. For this reason, the dose of *topiramate* is adjusted based on how well your kidneys are functioning. A blood test may be needed to test your kidney function.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

**It is recommended you drink several glasses of water each day while receiving *topiramate* to reduce the chance of developing kidney stones from dehydration.**

*Glossary Definitions*

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in eye pressure.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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*Consult your healthcare professional before using this drug.*

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### **Valproate or Valproic Acid (brand name Depakene) Divalproex Sodium (brand name Depakote)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is commonly used to control certain types of seizures\* (convulsions). It may also be used to treat bipolar disorder (mood swings), schizoaffective disorder and migraine headaches. \* It is also used sometimes to treat other conditions such as impulsive behavior, and other mental illnesses. Your doctor can explain these other purposes as they apply to you.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Nausea, Gastric distress, Mild stomach cramps, Change in menstrual periods, Diarrhea, Tiredness, Weight gain, Hair loss, Memory or concentration difficulties.

**Weight gain** may occur on this medication and can be preventable in many cases if the right support and strategies are in place. The cause of weight gain is unknown but may be involved with appetite control, such as not feeling full, leading to more eating. People who gain weight are at risk of developing diabetes (see below) or having problems with fats in their blood that can contribute to heart disease. Talk with your treatment team about how to prevent weight gain.

**Diabetes** (trouble with sugar control) may be more of a risk for people who take this medication. Symptoms of extreme thirst, frequent urination, excess hunger, and weakness should be reported to your doctor. Your ethnic background, family history and medical history may also affect your risk of developing diabetes. Please be sure to discuss these risks with your healthcare provider.

#### **Less Common:**

Tremors,\* Drowsiness,\* Dizziness, Unsteadiness, Liver test problems (rarely liver failure), Pancreatitis,\* Unusual bleeding or bruising, Headache

**In order to make sure the level of drug in your body is correct, and to reduce the chances of serious side effects, occasional blood tests will be done while you are taking this medication.**

*Valproic Acid (brand name Depakene)*  
*Divalproex Sodium (brand name Depakote) (con't)*

**You should report immediately to your doctor if you notice that you are bruising easily, have tiny purple skin spots, bloody nose, dark urine, abdominal pain, nausea or anorexia.\* These might be signs of a problem with your liver or pancreas and further tests may be needed.**

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known, however some birth defects are believed to be associated with its use. Since there is some risk that it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like drowsiness,\* could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The FDA has approved this medication for use in the treatment of seizures\* in people 2 years and older, in the treatment of migraines\* in people 16 years and older, and in the treatment of mania in people 18 years and older.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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**Glossary Definitions**

\*Migraine Headaches: Throbbing headache, that causes moderate to severe pain, usually on one side of the head, is worsened by physical activity, light, sounds and smells, and can sometimes include nausea and vomiting.

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Pancreatitis: Sudden onset or long-standing inflammation of the pancreas that may be mild or life threatening.

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Anorexia: Loss of appetite resulting in too much weight loss and loss of nutrition.

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### ***Verapamil (brand name Calan, Isoptin, Verelan)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used for a number of different purposes. *Verapamil* is commonly used to treat people with high blood pressure, fast heart rates, or angina. It has been determined by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be safe and effective for these purposes. *Verapamil* has also been used to treat other conditions not approved by the FDA, such as mania.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Constipation, Dizziness, Low blood pressure, Headache, Fatigue, Nausea

#### **Less common:**

Unusually slow heart rate, Fast or pounding heart beats, Rash, Worsening of heart function in some people with some types of pre-existing heart problems, Increased liver function tests (rarely liver damage)

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The FDA has not approved this medication for use in the treatment of blood pressure and some heart problems in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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## **V. MEDICATIONS FOR ATTENTION-DEFICIT/ HYPERACTIVITY DISORDERS**

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Psychostimulant Medications**

**Dextroamphetamine (brand name Adderall, Dexedrine)**  
**Dexmethylphenidate (brand name Focalin XR)**  
**Methylphenidate (brand name Concerta, Metadate, Metadate ER, Ritalin, Ritalin LA, Metylin, Daytrana)**  
**Isdexamfetamine (Vyvanse)**  
**Pemoline (brand name Cylert)**

### **Purpose and benefits of these medications:**

These medications are used to treat several different problems. The most common problem treated with these medications is attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in both young people and adults. *Dextroamphetamine*, *dexmethylphenidate* and *methylphenidate* are generally believed to be more effective than *pemoline* for this disorder. These medications are sometimes also used to treat depression in medically ill elderly people, or people who also have serious medical conditions (e.g., AIDS). *Dextroamphetamine* and *methylphenidate* can be used to treat a sleep disorder called narcolepsy.\*

### **Risks of these medications:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. If you have a history of drug abuse or drug addiction, please inform your physician.

### **Relatively common:**

Trouble sleeping, Loss of appetite, Irritability, Weight loss, Stomachache, Headache, Nervousness, Restlessness, Dizziness

### **Less common:**

Fast or pounding heartbeat, Increased blood pressure, Changes in mood (sad, depressed), Unusual muscle movements called tics, Changes in growth rate of some children (see special instructions below)

### **Unusual:**

Irregular heartbeat, Psychosis

### ***Pemoline:***

**The risk of liver problems with *pemoline* is greater than with the other medications in this group. Blood tests to detect problems with your liver will need to be done routinely while you are on this medication. Your doctor will discuss the risks and benefits of this medication and ask you or your guardian to sign a special consent form for its use (see page 103).**

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of these medications during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there are risks that they could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking these medications should be avoided because the medicines will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect and possibly others worse, and are best avoided.

**Glaucoma:** Individuals with glaucoma should not use dexamethylphenidate (Focalin XR) or Methylphenidate (Ritalin).

**Cardiovascular and Psychiatric risks:** A Food and Drug Administration (FDA) review of reports of serious cardiovascular adverse events in patients taking usual doses of certain ADHD products (Adderall, Concerta, Dexedrine, Focalin XR, Metadate and Ritalin) revealed reports of sudden death in patients with underlying serious heart problems or defects, and reports of stroke and heart attack in adults with certain risk factors.

Another FDA review of these ADHD medicines revealed a slight increased risk (about 1 per 1,000) for drug-related psychiatric adverse events, such as hearing voices, becoming suspicious for no reason, or becoming manic, even in patients who did not have previous psychiatric problems.

The FDA recommends that children, adolescents, or adults who are being considered for treatment with ADHD drug products work with their physician or other health care professional to develop a treatment plan that includes a careful health history and evaluation of current status, particularly for cardiovascular and psychiatric problems (including assessment for a family history of such problems).

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. The dosage may need to be decreased for sometime before you stop. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

Some changes in growth rate may occur with some people treated with these medications.

The FDA has not approved *methylphenidate*, *dexamethylphenidate* and *pemoline* for use in children less than 6 years old, and *dextroamphetamine* for use in children less than 3 years old.

*Psychostimulant Medications (con't)*

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

Try not to take these medications late in the day. This may make falling asleep more difficult. Your doctor may need to make adjustments in the time and dosage of these medications in order for you to receive the best effects and fewest side effects.

You may be allergic to the coloring agent, tartrazine, used in some formulations of *dextroamphetamine*.

*Glossary Definitions*

\*Narcolepsy: Disorder where patient experiences recurring, unstoppable attacks of sleep during normal waking hours.

## PATIENT INFORMATION/CONSENT FORM FOR CYLERT (PEMOLINE)

Cylert (pemoline) should not be used by patients until there has been a complete discussion of the risks and benefits of Cylert therapy and written informed consent has been obtained.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Cylert therapy has been associated with liver abnormalities ranging from reversible liver function test increases that do not cause any symptoms, to liver failure which may result in death. Therefore, you should have a full discussion of the risks and benefits of Cylert before beginning therapy.

### PATIENT CONSENT:

My (son, daughter, ward) \_\_\_\_\_(s) treatment with Cylert has been explained to me by Dr. \_\_\_\_\_.

The following points of information, among others, have been specifically discussed and explained and I have had the opportunity to ask any questions concerning this information.

1. I, \_\_\_\_\_(Patient/Parent/Guardian(s) name), understand that Cylert is used to treat certain types of patients with the behavioral syndrome called attention- deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and that I (my son/daughter/ward) am that type of patient.  
**Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_
2. I understand that there is a risk that I (my son/daughter/ward) might develop liver failure, which may result in death, while taking Cylert. I understand that this could occur even after long-term therapy.  
**Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_
3. I understand that I (my son/daughter/ward) should have blood taken to test liver function before Cylert is begun, and every two weeks from then on while taking Cylert. I understand that although the liver function tests may help detect if I (my son/daughter/ward) develop liver damage, it may do so only after significant, irreversible and potentially fatal damage has already occurred.  
**Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_
4. I understand that if I (my son/daughter/ward) stop taking Cylert and then restart it at a later time (e.g., after summer vacation), I (my son/daughter/ward) should again have blood taken to test liver function before Cylert is restarted, and every two weeks from then on while taking Cylert.  
**Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_
5. I understand that I should immediately report any unusual symptoms to the doctor and should be especially aware of persistent nausea, vomiting, fatigue, lethargy, loss of appetite, abdominal pain, dark urine, or yellowing of the skin or eyes.  
**Initials:** \_\_\_\_\_

I now authorize Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ to begin my (son/daughter/ward(s)) treatment with Cylert, or if treatment with Cylert has already begun, to continue this treatment.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature/Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip

Telephone #: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

**PHYSICIAN STATEMENT:**

I have fully explained to the patient (parent/guardian), \_\_\_\_\_ the nature and purpose of treatment with Cylert and the potential risks associated with that treatment. I have asked if he/she has any questions regarding this treatment or the associated risks and have answered these questions to the best of my ability.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Physician Signature/Date

**NOTE TO PHYSICIAN:**

It is strongly recommended that you retain a completed copy of this informed consent form in your patient(s) records.

**SUPPLY OF PATIENT INFORMATION/CONSENT FORMS:**

A supply of the Patient Information/Consent Forms as printed above is available, free of charge, by calling (847) 937-7302. Permission to use the above Patient Information/Consent Form by photocopy reproduction is hereby granted by Abbott Laboratories.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Atomoxetine (brand name Strattera)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is commonly used to treat attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) in both young people and adults. *Atomoxetine* has been shown to be as effective as the other medications used to treat ADHD, but unlike those other medications, this medication is not a stimulant. This drug is also being studied for use in treating depression. *Atomoxetine* is used for maintenance of ADHD in children and adolescences.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Stomach pain, Headache, Vomiting, Decreased appetite, Cough, Nausea, Irritability, Dizziness, Sleepiness

#### **Less common:**

Sexual difficulties,\* increased blood pressure, Increased heart rate, Urinary retention,\* Lightheadedness, Weight loss, Constipation, Dry mouth

#### **Allergic Reaction:**

One or a combination of the following symptoms, itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

**Cardiovascular and Psychiatric risks:** A Food and Drug Administration (FDA) review of reports of serious cardiovascular adverse events in patients taking usual doses of certain ADHD products revealed reports of sudden death in patients with underlying serious heart problems or defects, and reports of stroke and heart attack in adults with certain risk factors.

Another FDA review of these ADHD medicines revealed a slight increased risk (about 1 per 1,000) for drug-related psychiatric adverse events, such as hearing voices, becoming suspicious for no reason, or becoming manic, even in patients who did not have previous psychiatric problems.

The FDA recommends that children, adolescents, or adults who are being considered for treatment with ADHD drug products work with their physician or other health care professional to develop a treatment plan that includes a careful health history and evaluation of current status, particularly for cardiovascular and psychiatric problems (including assessment for a family history of such problems).

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in children less than 6 years old. Also, some changes in growth rate may occur with some people treated with this medication.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Sexual Difficulties: Loss of the ability to enjoy sex or to perform sexually.

\*Urinary Retention: Difficulty in being able to pass urine.

## **VI. OTHER PSYCHOACTIVE OR ADJUNCTIVE MEDICATIONS**

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Amantadine (brand name Symmetrel)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used for a variety of purposes, including helping to control some of the side effects people get from taking antipsychotic medications. The side effects that may be controlled include muscle tremors,\* muscle stiffness, slow monotone speech, expressionless facial appearance, exaggerated posturing of your head, neck, or jaw, difficulty swallowing, problems with eye movements, and restlessness.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dizziness, Headache, Lightheadedness, Nausea, Difficulty sleeping, Nervousness, Anxiety, Difficulty concentrating

#### **Less common:**

Low blood pressure (especially early in treatment, when getting up suddenly from a lying or sitting position), Reddish purple colored skin especially on your legs, Swollen ankles, Decreased appetite (potential weight loss), Constipation, Dry mouth

#### **Rare:**

Psychosis, Weakness, Slurred speech

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved this medication for use in children 1 year of age and older for the prevention and treatment of influenza A, one type of the “flu.” This is one of the other uses of *amantadine*. As a treatment for antipsychotic medication side effects, it is only approved by the FDA for adults.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Tremors: Shakes

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### **Anticholinergic Medications**

**Benztropine (brand name Cogentin)**

**Trihexyphenidyl (brand name Artane)**

**Specific Medication (list):** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This is one of several different medications used to help control some of the side effects people get from taking antipsychotic medications. The side effects that may be controlled include restlessness, muscle tremors, \* muscle stiffness, slow monotone speech, expressionless facial appearance, exaggerated posturing of your head, neck, or jaw, difficulty swallowing, and problems with eye movements.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dry mouth, Blurred vision, Constipation, Difficulty passing urine

#### **Less common:**

Drowsiness,\* Confusion, Memory problems, Dizziness, Unusually fast heartbeat, Skin rash

#### **Rare:**

Worsening of glaucoma\* (if this were to happen, you would get severe eye pain, and you would need medical help)

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like drowsiness and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

## Anticholinergic Medications (con't)

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

### **Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved *Benztropine* (Cogentin) for use in children 3 years of age and older. However, its use in this age group is recommended with caution. *Trihexyphenidyl* (*Artane*) has no specific age-based dosing approval from the FDA and therefore should be considered not approved for use in children.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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### *Glossary Definitions*

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in the eye pressure.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Beta Blockers**

**atenolol (brand name Tenormin)**

**metoprolol (brand name Lopressor)**

**nadolol (brand name Corgard)**

**propranolol (brand name Inderal)**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication has many different uses. *Beta blockers* are commonly used to treat a variety of heart and circulation problems such as high blood pressure and angina (chest pain caused by heart problems), migraine headaches,\* and abnormal heart beats. They have been determined by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be safe and effective for these purposes and a number of other purposes. *Beta-blockers* have also been used to treat other conditions not approved by the FDA, such as anxiety, agitation or aggression, and tremors\* that are a side effect of lithium. This is also one of several different medications used to help control some of the side effects people get from taking antipsychotic medications. The particular side effect that may be controlled by this medication is restlessness.

### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

### **Relatively common:**

Dizziness, Lightheadedness, Low blood pressure, Tiredness, Slow heart rate

### **Less common:**

Confusion, Cold hands or feet, Swollen ankles or feet, Impotence,\* Depression, Problems with sleep, Nightmares, Nausea, Diarrhea, Difficulty breathing or a night-time cough, Uneven heart beats

### **Special risks for some people (please inform your healthcare team if any apply):**

\*People with diabetes may have problems with blood sugar control, and recognizing when they have low blood sugar.

\*People with asthma may have more trouble with breathing.

\*People with angina should not stop this medication suddenly, since this may cause a worsening of the angina.

**Rare:**

***Allergic Reaction***

One or a combination of the following symptoms: itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like drowsiness\* and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug administration (FDA) has not approved *oral propranolol* for use in people younger than 18 years of age. However, FDA-approved information states that enough study has been done to allow fair estimates of its safety and effectiveness in the treatment of heart and circulation problems in children. The FDA has not approved other *beta-blocker* medications for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Migraine Headaches: Throbbing headache, that causes moderate to severe pain, usually on one side of the head, is worsened by physical activity, light, sounds and smells, and can sometimes include nausea and vomiting.

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Impotence: Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Hormonal***

#### **Flutamide (brand name Eulexin)**

##### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

Eulexin® is approved by the FDA in the treatment of prostate\* cancer. This medication slows down the presence and activity of male hormones, called androgens. This medication also is used to control and decrease sexual impulses, sexual fantasies and aggressive behaviors.

##### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

##### **Relatively common:**

Hot flashes, Decrease in sexual desire and ability (impotence)

##### **Less common:**

Dark urine, yellowing of skin and eyes, Stomach pain, Sun sensitivity and Liver complications

##### **Special risks for some people (please inform your healthcare team if any apply):**

Patients with severe liver problems and women who are pregnant or suspect they may be pregnant should not use this medication.

##### **Rare:**

##### ***Allergic Reaction***

One or a combination of the following symptoms: Itching or rash, Swelling in face or hands, Swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, Chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical help immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

##### **Risks in pregnancy:**

This medication can cause harm to an unborn child. This medication should only be used by pregnant women when there is a life-threatening situation.

**Other risks:**

This medication may cause an increase in liver enzyme\* levels, which may be temporary and mild in healthy individuals. Patients also may be at risk of bone density (thickness) problems with long-term use that may not be reversible.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications, over-the-counter or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\***prostate**: an organ/gland which is part of a male's reproductive system

\***enzyme**: a chemical normally found in the body; for example in the liver. Enzyme levels are used to help doctors figure out how a medication is affecting the body.

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### **Hormonal**

#### **Leuprolide Injectable (brand name Lupron, Lupron Depot, Lupron Depot-3 Months, Lupron Depot-4 Months)**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Frequency:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

Leuprolide is a gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) that is injected into a muscle (IM). The FDA has approved its use for the treatment of prostate\* and uterine\* cancer. This medication is also used to control and decrease sexual impulses, sexual fantasies and aggressive behaviors.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Rapid mood changes during early stages of treatment, Sweating and hot flashes, Lack of periods in women, Headaches

#### **Less common:**

Nausea and vomiting, Dizziness, Difficulty sleeping, Swelling of hands and feet, Groin pain, Difficulty urinating, Memory loss, Mood or mental changes, Enlargement of breast tissue in males

#### **Special risks for some people (please inform your healthcare team if any apply):**

\*Women who are pregnant or who may become pregnant

\*Women with a history of any abnormal vaginal bleeding

\*People who are hypersensitive to gonadotropin releasing hormones (GnRH) or related drugs

\*People with congestive heart failure or other conditions requiring sodium restrictions

\*People who have had heart problems

\*People with a history of cancer

\*People with a history of osteoporosis (bone thickness problems)

**Rare:**

***Allergic Reaction***

One or a combination of the following symptoms: itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Seek medical attention immediately if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

This medication should not be used by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

**Other risks:**

This medication has been reported to cause swelling of the breasts and injection site irritation and inflammation. Long-term use may result in loss of bone density (thickness) which may not be reversible.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, contact your doctor, nurse or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people less than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications, over-the-counter or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\***prostate**: an organ/gland which is part of a male's reproductive system

\***uterine**: involving the uterus, a female reproductive organ

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### **Hormonal**

#### **Medroxyprogesterone (brand name Provera)**

#### **Medroxyprogesterone Injectable (brand name Depo-Provera)**

**Specific Medication:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Frequency/Route:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

Depo-Provera® is a hormone (form of progestin), that is injected directly into the muscle. Provera® is taken by mouth. This medication is approved by the FDA for pregnancy prevention in women, to treat women with no periods and to treat certain types of cancer. This medication is also used to control and decrease sexual impulses, sexual fantasies and aggressive behaviors.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Males taking this medication may experience: Feeling tired, Weight gain, Cold, Hot flashes, Headache, Inability to sleep, Nausea, and Superficial vein inflammation

Women taking this medication may experience: Menstrual irregularities, Spotting, Breakthrough bleeding, Weight gain, Nausea/vomiting, Headaches, and Breast tenderness

#### **Less common:**

Anemia, Swelling, Appetite changes, Chest pain, Convulsions, Yellowing of skin and eyes, and Deep vein clotting.

#### **Special risks for some people (please inform your healthcare team if any apply):**

This medication should not be taken if you have the following conditions: breast cancer, liver disease, pregnancy, vaginal bleeding, and inflammation of veins. Local irritation or inflammation may also occur at the site of injection.

Precaution should be taken if you have certain conditions. Inform your provider if you have depression, fluid retention, or diabetes.

**Rare:**

***Allergic Reaction***

One or a combination of the following symptoms: itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing. Call your doctor or seek medical attention if any of these signs or symptoms appears.

**Risks in pregnancy:**

This medication should not be used by women who are pregnant or breastfeeding.

**Other risks:**

The FDA has reported that long-term use of this medication may lead to a decrease in bone density (thickness). Duration of the therapy should be limited because it may decrease bone minerals which is not completely reversible. This may lead to bone conditions such as osteoporosis.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications, over-the-counter or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Acamprosate Calcium (brand name Campral)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used to help people who have had problems with alcohol abuse or dependence. It helps people to avoid using alcohol as long as they have been alcohol-free when treatment with ***Acamprosate Calcium*** is begun. Treatment with this medication is probably most effective when it is a part of an overall plan that includes some form of counseling to treat alcohol abuse.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Diarrhea, Insomnia

#### **Less common:**

Anxiety, Depression, Loss of sensation and/or muscle weakness in your legs or arms, Dizziness, Loss of appetite

#### **Rare:**

Psychotic reactions, Ringing in ears, Kidney problems, including possible kidney failure

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known, but abnormal births have been linked to ***Acamprosate Calcium*** use during pregnancy. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like dizziness and impairment of judgment, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs with this medication may make these side effects, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

You should not start this medication until you have been sober for at least 12 hours.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first.

**If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your physician, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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***Glossary Definitions***

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Impotence: Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### **Clonidine: (brand name Catapres)**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used for a number of different purposes. *Clonidine* is commonly used to control high blood pressure. It has been determined by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be safe and effective for this purpose. *Clonidine* has also been used to treat other conditions not approved by the FDA, such as the treatment of withdrawal from opiates, and other substances, treatment of a condition called Tourette's syndrome, \* attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), migraine headaches, \* and in several other psychiatric conditions.

This medication is available in tablet form and as a skin patch.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Dry mouth, Drowsiness\* and sedation, Constipation, Dizziness  
(With the patch, local irritation of your skin can occur.)

#### **Less common:**

Low blood pressure (especially when standing up quickly), Headache, Fatigue, Weakness, Nervousness, Agitation, Depression, Rash, Nausea, Decreased sexual drive or ability

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk present, you and your doctor should discuss what options are available to you before you become pregnant. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. If you take *clonidine* while nursing, it will be in your breast milk. Breastfeeding an infant while taking this medication should be done with caution and only after discussing it with your doctor.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication may make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, it is very important to speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems and potential abrupt rise in blood pressure (rebound hypertension). **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in the treatment of high blood pressure in people younger than 12 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

- \*Tourette's Syndrome: A inherited disorder in which a patient suffers from frequent muscle or verbal tics, which are brief, rapid, and purposeless movements or speech.
- \*Migraine Headaches: Throbbing headache, that causes moderate to severe pain, usually on one side of the head, is worsened by physical activity, light, sounds and smells, and can sometimes include nausea and vomiting.
- \*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Diphenhydramine (brand name Benadryl)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is one in a group of medications called antihistamines. It is used for a number of different purposes. This is one of several different medications used to help control some of the side effects people get from taking antipsychotic medications. The side effects that may be controlled include restlessness, muscle tremors,\* muscle stiffness, slow monotone speech, expressionless facial appearance, exaggerated posturing of your head, neck, or jaw, difficulty swallowing, and problems with eye movements.

Another common use is to treat allergic conditions such as hay fever, or allergic reactions such as hives. It has also been used as a short-term treatment for sleeping problems, motion sickness, and for relief of cough and common cold symptoms.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Sedation, Sleepiness, Dizziness, Dry mouth, Blurred vision, Constipation, Upset stomach

#### **Less common:**

Difficulty passing urine, Confusion, Memory problems, Unusually fast heartbeat, Skin rash

#### **Rare:**

Worsening of glaucoma\* (if this were to happen, you would get severe eye pain, and you would need medical help)

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk present, you and your doctor should discuss what options are available to you before you become pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will not only be in your milk and could affect your baby, but may also decrease the amount of milk produced.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs or alcohol with this medication will make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

***Elderly patients:***

This medicine may cause increased problems with sleep and other stimulant effects opposite to those in younger adults. When given this medication, elderly men have more frequent problems with difficulty passing urine than younger men.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved this medication for use in the treatment of antipsychotic side effects in children weighing 20 pounds or more. It has been approved for use in the treatment of sleep problems in children 12 years and older.

Children may have increased problems with sleep and other stimulant effects opposite to those in adults.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Tremors: Shakes

\*Glaucoma: A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in the eye pressure.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Disulfiram (brand name Antabuse)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used to help people who have had problems with alcohol abuse or dependence. It helps people to avoid using alcohol by causing a very unpleasant reaction if they drink even a small amount of alcohol.

Treatment with this medication is probably most effective when it is a part of an overall plan that includes some form of counseling to treat alcohol abuse.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication. The side effects marked with a single asterisk (\*) below, usually fade away after a couple of weeks of treatment with *disulfiram*. The side effects marked with a double asterisk (\*\*) are defined in the Glossary at the end of this information sheet.

#### **Relatively common:**

Drowsiness,\*\* Tiredness,\* Rash.

#### **Less common:**

Headache,\* Impotence,\* Acne,\* Metallic or garlic-like after-taste,\* Loss of sensation and/or muscle weakness in your legs or arms, which usually improves after stopping the *disulfiram*

#### **Rare:**

Possible worsening of psychosis, Psychotic reactions, Liver problems, and Vision problems called optic neuritis that usually improves after stopping the *disulfiram*

#### **Risk of drinking alcohol while taking this medication:**

Unlike some the reactions listed above, the reactions listed here are likely to happen if you drink alcohol while taking this medication. The symptoms, which may be more or less intense, include: flushing, throbbing in the head and neck, throbbing headache, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, nausea, vomiting, sweating, thirst, chest pain, pounding heartbeat, rapid heartbeat, low blood pressure causing dizziness or fainting, anxiety, weakness, blurred vision, and confusion. Most often these reactions last from 30 minutes to a few hours, followed by sleep and full recovery. However, there is a chance that such a reaction may lead to even more serious problems such as extremely low breathing rates, ineffective blood circulation complicated by irregular heartbeats, heart attack, or heart failure, unconsciousness, seizures,\* and even death.

**IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT YOU DO NOT DRINK ALCOHOL!!**

**Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known, but abnormal births possibly linked to *disulfiram* use during pregnancy have been reported. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be avoided because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. Using street drugs with this medication may make this side effect, and possibly others, worse, and are best avoided.

You should not start this medication until you have been sober for at least 12 hours.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication **WILL NOT** immediately stop the bad reactions described above. You will continue to be at-risk of having these reactions for about two weeks after you stop the *disulfiram*. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your physician, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**You must avoid all sources of alcohol while taking this medication. This includes the alcohol that may be in some medications, such as cough and cold remedies that you can buy at a pharmacy or food store without a prescription. Be sure to check the ingredients in any product you use. Some people may even react to products that are used on your skin, such as aftershave lotion, but this is unlikely.**

*Glossary Definitions*

\*Drowsiness: Sleepiness

\*Impotence: Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.

\*Seizures: Describes various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.

## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information (2010)

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### ***Naltrexone (brand name ReVia, and previously Trexan) Naltrexone Injection (brand name Vivitrol)***

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

This medication is used to help people who have had problems with alcohol dependence or addiction to narcotic drugs. It helps people to avoid using those substances in the future. Treatment with this medication is most effective when it is part of an overall plan that includes some form of counseling to treat alcohol or narcotic use. *Naltrexone* tablets are indicated for daily use, while *Naltrexone Injection* is extended-release formulation indicated for once a month administration.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Nausea, Vomiting, Dizziness, Problems with sleep, Anxiety, Nervousness, Stomach pain or cramps, Low energy, Joint and muscle pain, Headache, Loss of appetite and weight loss

#### **Less common:**

Liver problems (signs of this may include stomach pain lasting several days or more, white bowel movements, dark urine, yellowing of your eyes or skin)

This medication is not like disulfiram (Antabuse). It does not cause a violent reaction like disulfiram when taken with alcohol.

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

The effects of this medication during pregnancy are not completely known. Since there is some risk it could be harmful to a fetus, it is important to avoid becoming pregnant. Your doctor can tell you what options are available to you. If you intend to become pregnant or believe you may be pregnant already, you should talk to your doctor about your choices. Breastfeeding while taking this medication should be discussed with your doctor beforehand.

#### **Other risks:**

Some side effects, like sedation and dizziness, could make it dangerous to drive a car or do other things that require you to be alert. This medication does not reverse the harmful effects of alcohol on your ability to perform these activities. Using this medication with narcotics may result in the narcotic causing severe problems with breathing before the narcotic causes the desired effect. It is advisable for you to carry identification that would tell emergency medical people that you are taking this medication.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Other ways to treat your illness:**

Other medications and non-drug methods may be available to treat your illness. You may ask your doctor to give you more information about these other medications or treatments and their benefits and risks.

Your participation in a comprehensive treatment plan is important to successfully stay drug or alcohol free.

**Children and adolescents:**

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not approved this medication for use in people younger than 18 years old.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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## Massachusetts Department of Mental Health Medication Information Form (2010)

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### **Thyroid hormones (brand name Levoxyl, Synthroid, levothyroxine, T<sub>4</sub>, Cytomel, liothyronine, T<sub>3</sub>, Thyrolar, liotrix, T<sub>3</sub>/T<sub>4</sub> )**

#### **Purpose and benefits of this medication:**

These medications are most commonly used to treat people who have a deficiency in their thyroid hormones. This condition is called hypothyroidism. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved the use of these medications for this condition. Some doctors have used these medications to treat other conditions not approved by the FDA. Among these other conditions are depression and certain types of bipolar disorder.

#### **Risks of this medication:**

The following are some of the possible side effects that may happen while taking this medication.

#### **Relatively common:**

Side effects from these medications usually only happen at the beginning of treatment or when the dose is too high. These side effects may mean you need to have your doctor check on the amount of medication you are taking.

Nervousness, Headache, Excessive sweating, Trouble tolerating heat, Trouble sleeping, Decreased appetite, Fast or pounding heartbeat. For women, Changes in menstrual cycle are possible.

#### **Less common:**

Skin rash or hives, chest pain, shortness of breath. If you experience any of these side effects, contact your doctor as soon as possible or get emergency care:

When used in doses that result in levels of thyroid in your body that are higher than your body would normally have, there may be some risk of a bone problem called osteoporosis.\* Women past menopause probably have the highest risk of this side effect.

#### **Risks in pregnancy:**

When taken during pregnancy for treatment of hypothyroidism, no harmful effects of this medication are known to occur to the fetus. This may be due to the fact that this medication does not readily go from the mother to the fetus.

However, breastfeeding while taking this medication should be done with caution and physician supervision because the medicine will be in your milk.

**Other risks:**

People with diabetes mellitus (“sugar diabetes”), some kinds of heart trouble, or with high blood pressure may have additional risks from these medications. If you have one of these conditions, be sure your doctor knows this. Having one of these illnesses does not necessarily mean you cannot take one of these thyroid medications, or that you will have a problem if you do take one of them. Your doctor will be able to explain what risks, if any, apply to you. Using street drugs with this medication may make some of the side effects worse, and are best avoided.

If you decide to stop taking this medication, speak with your doctor first. Stopping the medication suddenly may cause problems, especially in people who have diabetes. **If you forget to take a dose of your medication, do not take double the dose but wait until the next dose is due or contact your doctor, nurse, or pharmacist for instruction.**

**Children and adolescents:**

The FDA has approved these medications for use in people younger than 18 years old for the treatment of hypothyroidism and related conditions. The FDA has not approved these medications for the treatment of psychiatric disorders in children or adults.

**Be sure to tell your provider if you are taking other medications or herbal supplements because they may interfere or interact with your prescribed medication.**

**Potential Drug Interactions that you should be particularly concerned about:**

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**Special Instructions:**

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*Glossary Definitions*

\*Osteoporosis: Progressive decrease in the density of bones that weakens them and makes them more likely to break.

## **VII. The Current State of Knowledge about Antipsychotic Effectiveness**

## **The Current State of Knowledge About Antipsychotic Effectiveness**

1. Second-generation antipsychotic medications are not universally or consistently more effective in treating symptoms of psychosis than typical antipsychotic medications.1–6
2. In contrast to their relatively similar efficacy in treating positive symptoms, there are substantial differences among both typical and second-generation antipsychotic agents with regard to their propensity to cause extrapyramidal, metabolic, and other adverse effects. Second-generation antipsychotics generally have a lower risk to cause extrapyramidal symptoms 1, 6–8 including tardive dyskinesia, and some Second-generations have a higher rate of metabolic side effects 8–10 than typical.
3. Second-generation antipsychotic medications were thought to be more effective than typical antipsychotic medications in improving negative and cognitive symptoms,7,11–14 but the existence and extent of this advantage is questionable.15–17
4. The use of modest doses of some typical antipsychotic medications may reduce (or eliminate in some patients) the difference in the risk of motor side effects between second-generation and typical antipsychotic medications.2,8 Typical antipsychotic medications may be a suitable treatment option for some patients, particularly those at low risk for motor side effects.
5. Clozapine consistently outperforms all other antipsychotic medications, both typical and other second-generation, in the management of treatment-resistant schizophrenia.8,18–21
6. There are no consistent differences in treatment efficacy among various second-generation antipsychotic medications other than Clozapine; any such differences, if they exist, are likely to be small in magnitude.8
7. Research publications on individual antipsychotic medications frequently tend to overemphasize the relatively minor differences in efficacy between these medications; these differences can often be attributed to differences in study design.8, 22, 23
8. There is no best medication or best dose for all patients; the choice of an antipsychotic medication and its dose, and subsequent decisions about changes in treatment, require careful initial consideration and ongoing, shared decision making between the patient and clinician.7,8,24,25
9. Antipsychotic dosing is a key variable influencing the effectiveness of treatment.7,8,24
10. Treatment of any individual patient with an antipsychotic medication requires balancing efficacy and tolerability.
11. All patients on an antipsychotic medication, second-generation or typical, should be carefully monitored for both metabolic and motor side effects because each medication has a different side effect profile and each patient has different vulnerabilities and preferences.7,8 , 25,26
12. Switching antipsychotic medications in schizophrenia carries significant risk and should be undertaken carefully.27,28 Continuation of an agent in the absence of desired benefit and/or occurrence of significant adverse effects, however, is also

inappropriate; in the context of inadequate efficacy and/or safety-tolerability, carefully considered and informed switching to a suitable alternative agent should be considered.<sup>7,8,29,30</sup>

13. Although there is an extensive database to guide optimal antipsychotic therapy, there are many important gaps in this database.<sup>8</sup>

14. There is a significant lag between identification of important clinical questions and implementation of well-designed studies to address such questions. Furthermore, there is often a lag between completion of studies and publication of their findings, leading to a misrepresentation of the world of existing data. Additionally, there is often a significant lag between the publication of important clinical trials and the translation of findings of that research into practice.<sup>8,22</sup>

15. The role of the state mental health system is to make available the best possible services to individuals with severe mental illness to enable them to lead maximally productive and meaningful lives.<sup>8,31–35</sup> Toward this end, public mental health policy involves several balancing acts: (1) provide "all" maximally effective services in the context of limited resources; (2) articulate clear practice standards in the context of scientific uncertainty; (3) effectively guide good practice without interfering with the doctor-patient locus of clinical decision making; and (4) harmonize often conflicting objectives of multiple stakeholders (patients, providers, families, etc).<sup>36</sup> .

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## **IX. GLOSSARY and INDEX**

## Glossary

- Agranulocytosis:** A medical term for “low white blood cell count.” White blood helps help fight infection, so if your white blood cell count gets too low, you may be less protected to fight infections such as pneumonia.
- Akathisia:** A condition characterized by uncontrollable motor restlessness.
- Akinesia:** The loss or impairment of voluntary activity of a muscle.
- Allergic Reaction:** One or a combination of the following symptoms: itching or rash, swelling in face or hands, swelling or tingling in the mouth or throat, chest tightness and/or trouble breathing.
- Anorexia:** Loss of appetite resulting in too much weight loss and loss of nutrition.
- Drowsiness:** Sleepiness.
- Dyslipidemia:** An abnormal level of fats (cholesterol) in the blood.
- Dystonia:** State of disordered tonicity of tissues (as of muscle).  
Very bad muscle spasm.
- Enzyme:** A chemical normally found in the body; for example in the liver. Enzyme levels are used to help doctors figure out how a medication is affecting the body.
- Glaucoma:** A group of disorders characterized by progressive damage to the eye, at least partly due to changes in eye pressure.
- Hyperthermia:** Very high fever.
- Impotence:** Also called erectile dysfunction, is the inability to initiate or maintain an erection.
- Metabolic Syndrome:** A combination of medical disorders that increase the risk of developing cardiovascular disease and diabetes. Signs and symptoms:
- Diabetes, impaired fasting glucose, or insulin resistance;
  - High blood pressure;
  - Central obesity, overweight with fat deposits around the waist;
  - Decreased HDL cholesterol; and
  - Elevated triglycerides.

<b><u>Migraine Headaches:</u></b>	Throbbing headache, that causes moderate to severe pain, usually on one side of the head, is worsened by physical activity, light, sounds and smells, and can sometimes include nausea and vomiting.
<b><u>Narcolepsy:</u></b>	Disorder where patient experiences recurring, unstoppable attacks of sleep during normal waking hours.
<b><u>Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome:</u></b>	A group of symptoms that may occur all at once when taking antipsychotic medications. They include high temperature, muscle stiffness, dizziness, and loss of consciousness. This does not happen very often but can be life-threatening.
<b><u>Osteoporosis:</u></b>	Progressive decrease in the density of bones that weakens them and makes them more likely to break.
<b><u>Pancreatitis:</u></b>	Sudden onset or long-standing inflammation of the pancreas that may be mild or life threatening.
<b><u>Prostate:</u></b>	An organ/gland that is part of a male's reproductive system.
<b><u>Seizures:</u></b>	Various experiences and behaviors that happen when something irritates the brain, including jerking and spasms of muscles throughout the body, brief loss of consciousness, loss of muscle control, loss of bladder control and confusion.
<b><u>Sexual difficulties:</u></b>	Loss of the ability to enjoy sex or to perform sexually.
<b><u>Tardive Dyskinesia:</u></b>	Uncontrolled muscle movements.
<b><u>Tourette's Syndrome:</u></b>	An inherited disorder in which a patient suffers from frequent muscle or verbal tics, which are brief, rapid, and purposeless movements or speech.
<b><u>Tremors:</u></b>	Shakes
<b><u>Urinary Retention:</u></b>	Difficulty in being able to pass urine.
<b><u>Uterine:</u></b>	Involving the uterus, a female reproductive organ

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