



ANTIPSYCHOTIC MEDICATION DOSE REDUCTION RESOURCES

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Specific dosage reduction protocols for antipsychotic medication use for individuals with dementia are not well researched. Common belief would support a reduction of 5 to 25 percent every 7 to 21 days as a method to reduce antipsychotic medication usage. However, as each person may react differently when antipsychotic medications are tapered, medication reduction plans should be personalized and several factors should be considered.

Factors such as the drug half-life of the medication (how long the drugs stays in system), how long the individual has been on the medication, other medications the individual is taking, and the individual's sensitivity to medications should all play a role in the development of an antipsychotic medication reduction plan. For example, some resources suggest that medications with a long half-life (a couple of days) can sometimes be reduced more aggressively than a medication with a shorter half-life (a couple of hours). As a team, the physicians, nurses, pharmacists, and individual or individual's advocate should discuss an antipsychotic medication reduction plan.

The following are some resources that discuss various methods of dose reduction:

1. Website that provides an example of a dose reduction tracking form:
https://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/files/physician_package.pdf
2. Guidance on dose reduction of antipsychotics from North Carolina:
https://www.documentforsafety.org/pub/forms/tapering_of_antipsychotic.pdf
3. Article focused primarily on switching antipsychotics, but with some general principles on tapering, as well: <http://download.bioon.com.cn/upload/201102/18/151108vuku7b22euzrfzc6.attach.pdf>
4. *Annals of Long-Term Care* article on managing antipsychotic dose reductions:
<http://www.annalsoflongtermcare.com/article/antipsychotics-discontinued-management-behavioral-psychological-symptoms-dementia>
5. Alzheimer's Society United Kingdom: Protocols for treating behavioral symptoms of dementia, including some specific guidance on dose reduction:
http://www.alzheimers.org.uk/site/scripts/documents_info.php?documentID=1191
6. American Psychiatric Association Practice Guidelines, including treatment of dementia:
<http://psychiatryonline.org/guidelines>