

Taking Antipsychotic Medicines: Your Daily Guide

Mental Health • Psychotic Disorders (Schizophrenia)

Antipsychotic medicines calm hearing voices, strong false beliefs, and confused thinking. They work best when you take them every day and watch for side effects.

Take it every day

- Take your medicine every day, even when you feel well.
- Some changes come in days. Full help takes several weeks.
- **Do not stop on your own.** Your symptoms come back.
- Ask about a shot every few weeks if pills are hard to remember.

Watch your weight and blood sugar

- Some of these medicines cause weight gain, high blood sugar, and high cholesterol.
- Keep your weight checks and blood tests.
- Eat healthy meals and stay active.

Report body movements

- Tell your provider about restlessness, stiff muscles, shaking, or shuffling steps.
- Report lip smacking, chewing, or tongue movements you cannot control. Early is best.

Stay safe every day

- Stand up slowly. Sit on the side of the bed first.
- Do not drink alcohol. Do not drive until you know how the medicine affects you.
- Drink water and avoid getting overheated.

- Eat fiber to prevent hard stools.

If you take clozapine

- Get every blood count on time. Next test: _____.
- Tell your provider before you start or stop smoking.

Call your provider today if you have

- Restlessness, stiff muscles, shaking, or new face or tongue movements
- Great thirst or hunger, or passing a lot of urine
- **On clozapine: fever, sore throat, or mouth sores. Call right away.**
- Dizziness when you stand up

Call 911 or your local emergency number if you have

- Fever with very stiff muscles, heavy sweating, or confusion
- A tight throat, or trouble breathing or swallowing
- Fainting, a seizure, or a racing, uneven heartbeat
- On clozapine: bad belly pain, a swollen belly, and vomiting

This handout supports, not replaces, advice from your own nurse or doctor.

Online: nclexpace.com/patient-education/antipsychotic-medicines/patient

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