

Drugs that May Cause Delirium or Problem Behaviors

This reference card lists common and especially problematic drugs that may cause delirium or contribute to problem behaviors in people with dementia.

This does not always mean the drugs should not be used, and not all such drugs are listed. If a patient develops delirium or has new problem behaviors, a careful review of all medications is recommended.

Be especially mindful of new medications.

Anticonvulsants

All can cause delirium, e.g.

Carbamazepine – Tegretol

Gabapentin – Neurontin

Levetiracetam – Keppra

Valproic acid – Depakote

Pain

All opiates can cause delirium if dose is too high or increased too quickly.

Codiene – Empirin, many others

Fentanyl – Duragesic

Hydrocodone – Lortab

Hydromorphone – Palladone,
Dilaudid

Meperidine – Demerol

Morphine – MS Contin, MS IR

Oxycodone – OxyContin

Tramadol – Ultram

Psychiatric

All psychiatric medications should be reviewed as possible causes, as effects are unpredictable.

Notable offenders include:

Benzodiazepines e.g.

-Alprazolam – Xanax

-Clonazepam – Klonopin

-Lorazepam – Ativan

Stimulants e.g.

-Methylphenidate – Ritalin

Hypnotics (Sleep Medications) e.g.

-Eszopiclone – Lunesta

-Zaleplon – Sonata

-Zolpidem – Ambien

Tricyclic Antidepressants e.g.

-Amitriptyline – Elavil

-Doxepin – Silenor, Sinequan

-Nortriptyline – Pamelor

Parkinson's/Restless Legs

Most Parkinson's disease medications can cause psychosis.

Amantadine – Symadine, Symmetrel

Bromocriptine – Parlodel

Levodopa – Sinemet, Stalevo

Pramipexole – Mirapex

Rasagiline – Azilect

Ropinrole – Requip

Rotigotine – Neupro

Selegiline – Eldepril, Emsam, Zelapar

Antibiotics/Antivirals

Difficult to distinguish drug effects from effects of infection. Others may contribute as well.

Antiviral

-Acyclovir – Zovirax

-Valacyclovir – Valtrex

Fluoroquinolones e.g.

-Levofloxacin – Levaquin

-Ciprofloxacin – Cipro

Metronidazole – Flagyl

Vancomycin – Vancocin

Steroids

Corticosteroids e.g.

-Prednisone – Deltasone, etc.

Testosterone – Androgel, etc.

Cardiac Medications

Antiarrhythmics

Digoxin – Digitek, Lanoxin

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*Anticholinergics—all drugs on this side of the card. May impair cognition and cause psychosis. Drugs available over-the-counter marked with **

Tricyclic Antidepressants

Amitriptyline – Elavil
Clomipramine – Anafranil
Desipramine – Norpramin
Doxepin – Sinequan
Imipramine – Tofranil
Nortriptyline – Aventyl, Pamelor

Antihistamines / Allergy / Cough & Cold Medicines

***Azelastine** – Astepro
 ***Brompheniramine** – Bromax, Bromfed, Lodrane
Carbinoxamine – Rondec
 ***Chlorpheniramine** – Chlor-Trimeton
 ***Clemastine** – Tavist
Cyproheptadine – Periactin
 ***Dexbrompheniramine** – Drixoral
Dexchlorpheniramine – Polaramine
 ***Diphenhydramine** – Benadryl
Hydroxyzine – Atarax, Vistaril
Olopatadine – Pataday, Patanol
Promethazine – Phenergan
Triprolidine – Triacin-C

Motion Sickness / Dizziness / Nausea

***Dimenhydrinate** – Dramamine
 ***Meclizine** – Antivert, Dramamine less drowsy
Promethazine – Phenergan
 ***Scopolamine** – Scopace, Transderm-Scop, Maldemar
Trimethobenzamide – Tigan

Movement Disorders

Benzotropine – Cogentin
Trihexyphenidyl – Artane

Bladder Antispasmodics

Darifenacin – Enablex
Flavoxate – Urispas
Oxybutynin – Ditropan
Solifenacin – VESIcare
Tolterodine – Detrol
Trospium – Sanctura

Insomnia / Sleep

***Diphenhydramine** – Somnex, Tylenol-PM, others
 ***Doxylamine** – Unisom, Medi-Sleep

Stomach and GI Tract

Ulcer and Reflux:

***Cimetidine** – Tagamet
Glycopyrrolate – Robinul
 ***Ranitidine** – Zantac

GI Antispasmodics:

Atropine – Sal-Tropine, Atreza
Belladonna Alkaloids – Donnatal, Bellamine S, Bel-Tabs, B&O supprettes
Clidinium – Librax
Dicyclomine – Bentyl
Hyoscyamine – Levsin, Anaspaz, Cytospaz
Methscopolamine – Pamine, Pamine Forte
Propantheline – Pro-Banthine

Anticholinergic Antipsychotics

Chlorpromazine – Thorazine
Clozapine – Clozaril
Loxapine – Loxitane
Olanzapine – Zyprexa
Pimozide – Orap
Quetiapine – Seroquel
Thioridazine – Mellaril