

Medicines Management & Pharmacy Services (MMPS)

Safety of antidepressants and antipsychotics in epilepsy

Psychotropic drugs should be introduced at a low dose and increased gradually until a therapeutic dose is reached. The risk of seizures increases with increasing doses.

Check for any interactions between the psychotropic and other medications being taken.

Drug	Safety in epilepsy	Comments
Antidepressants		
SSRIs	Low risk	No clear differences between drugs in the group
Moclobemide	Low risk	Not known to be proconvulsive
Mirtazapine	Use with caution	Less data and experience than with SSRIs
Venlafaxine	Use with caution	Proconvulsive in overdose
Duloxetine	Use with caution	Very little data available
Tricyclics	Higher risk	All lower the seizure threshold Amitriptyline is reputed to be the most proconvulsive
Lithium	Use with caution	Proconvulsive in overdose
Antipsychotics		
Haloperidol	Low risk	Low proconvulsive effect
Amisulpride Aripiprazole Olanzapine Quetiapine Risperidone Zuclopenthixol	Use with caution	Reasonably safe but SPCs of these drugs advise caution in epilepsy
Clozapine	Can cause dose-related seizures	Valproate used prophylactically to protect against seizures

ECT has anticonvulsive properties and may be considered for patients with depression.

More information on antidepressants in epilepsy can be found at NeLM Medicines Q& A:
[What is the most appropriate antidepressant to use in epileptics?](#)

References

- (1) Maudsley Prescribing Guidelines; 11th edition; 2012
- (2) Bazire; Psychotropic Drug Directory 2010

For further information: www.choiceandmedication.org/leedsandyorkpft

DRAFT

Provenance

Date Produced: March 2013
Author: Trish Brodrie

Valid until: March 2016
Quality Assurance Check by: CISSG

Review Date:

Produced by Pharmacy Department, LYPFT

For further information contact: pharmacyleedspft.lypft@nhs.net 0113 8556319

This information has been prepared by Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Medicines Management and Pharmacy Services