

Anticholinergic Meds (Continued)

Motion Sickness, Dizziness, Nausea

- Dimenhydrinate (Dramamine)
- Meclizine (Dramamine II, Antivert)
- Prochlorperazine (Compazine)
- Promethazine (Phenergan)
- Scopolamine (Transderm Scop, Scopace, Donnatal)

Tricyclic Antidepressants

- Amitriptyline (Elavil)
- Desipramine (Norpramin, Pertofrane)
- Doxepin (Sinequan, Silenor)
- Imipramine (Tofranil)
- Nortriptyline (Pamelor)
- Protriptyline (Vivactil)

Anxiety

- Hydroxyzine (Atarax)

Seizures, Mood Swings

- Carbamazepine (Tegretol)

Muscle Spasms, Muscle Pain

- Cyclobenzaprine (Flexeril, Fexmid, Amrix)
- Orphenadrine (Norflex, Flexon, Mephenamin)
- Phenyltoloxamine (Doans, Vicks Percogesic, Momentum Extra)

Anticholinergic Meds (Continued)

Ulcer & Acid Reflux

- Cimetidine (Tagamet)
- Ranitidine (Zantac)

Gastrointestinal Muscle Relaxers

- Clidinium (Librax)
- Dicyclomine (Bentyl)
- Hyoscyamine (Levsin, Levbid, Symax, HyoMax)

Eye Drops

- Atropine (Atropisol)
- Pheneramine (Opcon-A)
- Scopolamine (Isopto Hyoscine)

For more information on
medication use and safety in
older adults, visit:

www.IowaCERT.org

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OLDER ADULTS

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Anticholinergic Medications in Older Adults

What are they used for?

What side effects
can they cause?

Who is at risk?



Q: *What is an anticholinergic?*

A: "Anticholinergic" is a term for a drug that reduces acetylcholine activity. Acetylcholine is a neurotransmitter that plays an important role in the nervous system.

Q: *What side effects can they have?*

A: Anticholinergics can cause

- Confusion
- Sedation (sleepiness)
- Constipation
- Difficulty urinating
- Blurred vision
- Dry mouth
- High temperature
- High heart rate
- Loss of balance and falls



Q: *Who is at risk?*

A: Older adults, especially those with dementia, are more likely to have confusion and sedation side effects. Other side effects are also more common in older adults.

Q: *What should I do if I am taking an anticholinergic?*

A: Ask your doctor or pharmacist whether there is a safer drug you could be taking instead. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you think you are experiencing side effects.

Q: *Which drugs have anticholinergic effects?*

A: Drugs with anticholinergic effects are commonly used to treat allergies, colds, bladder problems, stomach or intestinal problems, and other ailments. Some common anticholinergics are listed on the next page and other side of this brochure.

Anticholinergic Medicines

(grouped by reason for use)

Allergies, Cold & Cough

- Azelastine nasal spray (Astelin, Astepro)
- Brompheniramine (Bromfed, Dimetapp)
- Chlorpheniramine (Clor-Trimeton)
- Clemastine or Meclostin (Tavist)
- Dexbrompheniramine (Drixoral)
- Dexchlorpheniramine (Polaramine)
- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl)
- Hydroxyzine (Atarax, Vistaril)
- Olopatadine nasal spray (Patanase)

Bladder Problems

- Darifenacin (Enablex)
- Flavoxate (Urispas)
- Oxybutynin (Ditropan, Gelnique)
- Solifenacin (Vesicare)
- Tolterodine (Detrol)
- Trospium (Sanctura)

Insomnia & Sleep Problems

- Diphenhydramine (Tylenol PM, generic PM pain relievers)
- Doxylamine (Unisom, generic nighttime sleep aids)