

Geriatric Optimization

Nonbenzodiazepine benzodiazepine receptor agonist hypnotics
(i.e. Z drugs)

Zolpidem (Ambien®)
Zaleplon (Sonata®)
Eszopiclone (Lunesta®)

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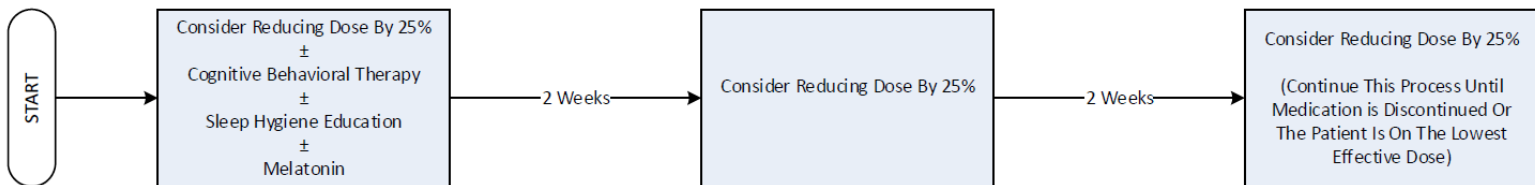
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WHY ARE THESE MEDICATIONS INAPPROPRIATE?

- Long-term use of these medications by adults over the age of 65 is associated with:¹
 - Adverse events; including delirium, falls, and fractures
 - Physical/psychological dependence
 - Increased emergency room visits/hospitalizations
 - Cognitive impairment
 - Motor vehicle crashes
 - Minimal improvement in sleep latency and duration
- In a meta-analysis assessing the links between Z-drugs and the risk for falls and fractures in older adults, it was found that exposure to these medications is associated with a **> 60% increase in the risk for fractures**.²
- From 2005 to 2010, emergency department visits due to adverse reactions associated with zolpidem in adults **increased by 220%** according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, with nearly 3 in 4 of these visits involving patients aged 45 and older.³
- It has also been found that the benefits associated with these medications for treating insomnia decline after four weeks of use, which makes their long-term efficacy limited.⁴

APPROACH TO OPTIMIZATION



- Consider available tablet sizes when decreasing doses for ease of patient administration.
- Consider reducing dose by 12.5% closer to end of taper.
- Consider Melatonin 0.3-2mg at initiation and adjusting accordingly.

GOAL: Full discontinuation OR adjusting regimen to lowest effective dose

ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES

Sleep hygiene education for patients who experience a recurrence of insomnia during tapering

- Avoid naps
- Avoid consuming caffeine at least 6 hours prior to bedtime⁶
- Avoid physical activity, nicotine, alcohol, & consuming large portions of food two hours before bed
- Attempt to wake up at the same time every day
- Go to bed only when tired⁷
- Get daylight exposure
- Keep a consistent nightly routine
- Avoid electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, laptops) 30-60 minutes before bedtime⁸

REFERENCES

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