

Psychotropic Tip Sheet for Frontline Nursing and CMT Staff

Risk Factors

These increase the potential for ADEs. Multiple factors increase risk.

- PRN or routine use of psychotropic medication
- Use of one or more psychotropic medications, including more than one drug from the same class or different classes
- Advanced age
- Polypharmacy

Signs & Symptoms

Any of these may indicate an ADE may have occurred.

- Falls
- Confusion
- Lethargy
- Change in alertness
- Change in behavior
- Cardiac arrhythmias
- Orthostatic hypotension
- Destabilized blood sugar
- Akathisia (inability to remain still)
- Parkinsonism
- Anticholinergic effects

Clinical Interventions

If any of these actions have occurred, the facility should conduct an investigation to determine if an ADE has occurred.

- Unplanned transfer to hospital
- Call to physician regarding change in usual behaviors or side effects
- New order for restraint/seclusion
- Abrupt stop order for psychotropic medication

Quality Improvement

Access HQIN's [Psychotropic Adverse Drug Events Self-Assessment](#) to assess your organization's commitment to preventing psychotropic ADEs.