



Medicines and Falls Risk in Care Homes

Commonly prescribed drugs that can contribute to falls

This list is to raise awareness of most commonly prescribed drugs that can contribute to falls risk.

The grading of the drugs has been adapted from the Medicines and Falls in Hospital: Guidance Sheet by John Radcliffe Hospital, Oxford, March; 2011 and approved by the British Geriatrics Society.

Key

High risk: Can commonly cause falls alone or in combination

Moderate risk: Can cause falls, especially in combination

Possibly causes falls, particularly in combination

DRUG NAME	COMMON USE	EFFECTS ON FALL RISK
Alfluzosin	Benign prostatic hyperplasia	Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Amitriptyline	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Amlodipine	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Atenolol	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Baclofen	Severe spasticity of voluntary muscle	Sleepiness and reduced muscle tone.
Bendroflumethiazide	Oedema, Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness.
Betahistine	Vertigo, Tinnitus	Sleepiness.
Bisoprolol	Hypertension, Angina, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Bumetanide	Oedema	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Candesartan	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure.
Captopril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Carbamazepine	Epilepsy	Sleepiness, slow reactions, unsteadiness and lack of movement control.
Carvedilol	Hypertension, Angina, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate.
Chlordiazepoxide	Anxiety, Acute alcohol withdrawal	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Chlorphenamine	Allergy, Urticaria	Drowsiness and blurred vision.
Chlorpromazine	Psychosis	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance.
Chlorthalidone	Oedema, Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness.
Cinnarazine	Nausea, Vomiting, Vertigo, Tinnitus	Sleepiness.
Citalopram	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, confusion.
Clomipramine	Depression, Phobia	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Clonazepam	Epilepsy	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Codeine	Pain	Sleepiness, slow reactions, impaired balance, delirium.
Dantrolene	Severe spasticity of voluntary muscle	Sleepiness, reduced muscle tone.
Diazepam	Insomnia, Anxiety	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Digoxin	Heart Failure	Slow heart rate.
Diltiazem	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Donepezil	Dementia	Fainting.
Dosulepin	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Doxazosin	Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Doxepin	Depression, Pruritus in eczema	
Duloxetine	Depression, Anxiety	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, dizziness, confusion.
Enalapril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Felodipine	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Fluoxetine	Depression	Confusion.
Fluphenazine	Psychosis	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance.
Flurazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Furosemide	Oedema, Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Gabapentin	Chronic pain	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, unsteadiness.
Galantamine	Dementia	Fainting.
Glyceryl trinitrate (GTN)	Angina	Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Haloperidol	Psychosis	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance.
Hydroxyzine	Pruritus	Drowsiness and blurred vision.
Irbesartan	Hypertension	Low blood pressure.

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Isosorbide mononitrate	Angina	Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Lercanidipine	Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Lisinopril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Lorazepam	Insomnia, Anxiety	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Lortemazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Losartan	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure.
Metolazone	Oedema, Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness.
Metoprolol	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate.
Mirtazapine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Morphine	Pain	Sleepiness, slow reactions, impaired balance, delirium.
Moxonidine	Hypertension	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing and sleepiness.
Nicorandil	Angina	Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Nifedipine	Hypertension, Angina	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Nitrazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Nortriptyline	Depression, Neuropathic pain	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Olanzapine	Psychosis, Agitation	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance.
Olmesartan	Hypertension	Low blood pressure.
Oxazepam	Anxiety	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Oxybutinin	Urinary incontinence	Drowsiness, dizziness and blurred vision.
Paroxetine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, confusion.
Perindopril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Phenobarbital	Epilepsy	Sleepiness, slow reactions, unsteadiness and lack of movement control.
Phenytoin	Epilepsy	Unsteadiness and lack of movement control.
Pramipexole	Parkinson's disease	Delirium and drop in blood pressure on standing.
Prazosin	Hypertension	Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Pregabalin	Epilepsy, Neuropathic pain	Sleepiness.
Prochlorperazine	Nausea, Vomiting, Vertigo	Movement disorder in long term use.
Promethazine	Allergy, Urticaria	Drowsiness and blurred vision.
Propranolol	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate.
Quetiapine	Psychosis, Agitation	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance.
Ramipril	Hypertension, Heart failure	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Risperidone	Psychosis, Agitation	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, slow reflexes, loss of balance.
Rivastigmine	Dementia	Fainting.
Ropinirole	Parkinson's disease	Delirium and Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Selegiline	Parkinson's disease	Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Sertraline	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, confusion.
Solifenacin	Urinary incontinence	Drowsiness, dizziness and blurred vision.
Sotalol	Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate
Tamsulosin	Benign prostatic hyperplasia	Drop in blood pressure on standing.
Telmisartan	Hypertension	Low blood pressure.
Temazepam	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Timolol eye drops	Glaucoma	Drop in blood pressure on standing, slow heart rate.
Tolterodine	Urinary incontinence	Drowsiness, dizziness and blurred vision.
Trazodone	Depression, Anxiety	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Trimipramine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Venlafaxine	Depression	Drop in blood pressure on standing, sleepiness, dizziness, confusion.
Verapamil	Hypertension, Angina, Arrhythmia	Low blood pressure, drop in blood pressure on standing.
Zolpidem	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.
Zopiclone	Insomnia	Drowsiness, slow reactions, impaired balance.

Adapted from Chiltern & Aylesbury Vale CCG, Guidance 4: Medicines and Falls Risk in Care Homes (2014)

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