Medication Review: Drugs known to increase risk of falling

A medication review can play an important part in falls prevention for those patients who are taking medications which are known to increase a patient’s risk of falling. The aim of a falls medication review should be to modify or withdraw the drug, but if this is not possible, close monitoring is required.

This medication table has been produced to help you identify medications that may increase a patient’s risk of falling. It should be used in conjunction with a clinical assessment and taking into account the patient’s individual circumstances. The prescriber should always consider the risk of reducing or withdrawing the medication alongside the risk associated with a fall. Therefore this table is for guidance only.

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| **Drug Class associated with increased risk of falls:** | Examples: |
| **Antipsychotics** | Haloperidol, Risperidone, Quetiapine, Olanzapine |
| **Benzodiazepines/Hypnotics (z-drugs)** | Temazepam, Nitrazepam, Diazepam, Lorazepam, Zopiclone, Zolpidem |
| **Antidepressants** | Amitriptyline, Dosulepin, Mirtazepine, Trazodone, Venlafaxine, Duloxetine |
| **Other CNS depressants** | Gabapentin, Pregabalin |
| **Opiate analgesics** | Morphine, Codeine, Tramadol, Oxycodone, Fentanyl and Buprenorphine patches |
| **Sedative anti-histamines** | Promethazine, Chlorpheniramine, Hydroxyzine |
| **Antimuscarinic drugs used for urinary disorders** | Oxybutynin, Solifenacin, Tolterodine, Trospium |
| **Alpha blockers** | Doxazosin, Tamsulosin, Alfluzosin |
| **Thiazide diuretics and diuretics** | Bendroflumethiazide, Indapamide  Furosemide , Bumetanide |
| **ACE inhibitors** | Ramipril, Perindropril, Lisinopril |
| **ARB angiotensin 2 receptor blockers** | Losartan, Candesartan, Irbesartan |
| **Beta blockers** | Bisoprolol, Atenolol, Metoprolol, Sotalol, Propanolol, Timolol (eye drops) |
| **Antianginals / calcium channel blockers** | Nitrates like isosorbide mononitrate or isosorbide dinitrate, Amlodipine, Felodipine, Nifedipine, Diltiazem, Verapamil |

Medications that can cause fall can cause ear /balance issues caused by vestibular damage, leading to tinnitis and deafness.

Medications that can cause falls cause confusion, hypothermia (low body temperature) hypotension (low blood pressure), sedation, visual impairment, dehydration, hypoglycaemia (low blood sugar) and drug induced parkinsonism (parkinson like symptoms) all which can cause falls or increase the risk of falls.