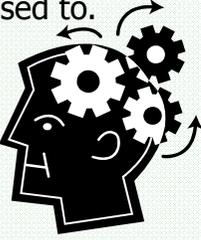


Problem	Is it serious?	What can be done about it?
<p><b>Blurred vision</b> (finding it difficult to see things clearly, bumping into things).</p> 	<p>This problem can be stopped.</p> <p>Blurred vision can be serious if it causes you to fall over, or have an accident.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Let your Care Co-ordinator, CPN or Doctor know.</li> <li>◆ If you have a close relative with the eyesight problem called "glaucoma", make sure you let your Doctor know.</li> <li>◆ If the problem is caused by taking a medication for movement problems (e.g. procyclidine), it might be possible for you to cut down the amount you take.</li> <li>◆ If blurred vision is a serious problem for you, your Doctor may talk to you about trying a different type of medication.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Problems thinking or concentrating.</b></p> <p>You may find:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ It's difficult to follow a TV programme or read a newspaper.</li> <li>◆ Your mind feels as if it's been slowed down.</li> <li>◆ You forget things a lot more than you used to.</li> </ul> 	<p>These problems are not usually serious, but they can be frustrating and make life difficult for you.</p> <p>People sometimes find it harder to concentrate and remember things as they get older. If you are depressed, or your medication is not controlling your illness well, this can also make it difficult for you to think clearly.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Let your Care Co-ordinator or Doctor know what is happening to you. They will need to know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* when you first noticed the problem.</li> <li>* whether it affects you all the time, or only at certain times of the day.</li> <li>* how the problem is affecting your life.</li> </ul> </li> <li>◆ Try to keep a <b>diary</b> of the sort of problems you're having for a week. If you live with a carer, relative or partner, ask if they can help you with this.</li> <li>◆ If your <b>medication</b> is causing the problem, it might be possible to reduce the dose you receive, or to try a different drug.</li> <li>◆ If the problem is linked to your <b>illness</b>, a higher dose or different type of medication might help.</li> </ul>

## Getting the best from your medication: Anticholinergic Side Effects



This leaflet gives information about anticholinergic side effects, which sometimes affect people who take antipsychotic medication.

It is designed to help you spot these side effects so that you can report them. It also gives advice about things you can do to improve these problems.

## Anticholinergic Side Effects

Anticholinergic, (pronounced “**an-ti-kol-in-er-jic**”), side effects are a group of problems that affect some people who take certain types of medication. These include some types of **antipsychotic** medication and some medicines for movement problems.

These problems do **not** affect everybody who takes these medicines, and sometimes they disappear after a few weeks.

If you think that you may have any of the side effects in this leaflet, it is important that you let your Doctor, Care Co-ordinator or CPN know.

**Stopping your medication without seeking advice could cause you to become unwell.**

### Antipsychotic medicines that sometimes cause anticholinergic side effects:

- ◆ Clozapine.
- ◆ Olanzapine.
- ◆ Chlorpromazine.
- ◆ Flupentixol.
- ◆ Pipothiazine.



### Examples of medicines most likely to cause anticholinergic side effects:

- ◆ Procyclidine (or other medicines used to treat shaking or stiffness).
- ◆ Oxybutynin (or other medicines used to treat bladder problems).
- ◆ Amitriptyline (or some other antidepressant medicines).

Problem	Is it serious?	What can be done about it?
<p><b>Dry mouth</b></p> 	<p>No, but it can feel uncomfortable and make you want to drink more than normal.</p> <p>Drinking too many sugary drinks (e.g. fruit juices, fizzy drinks) can cause teeth to rot.</p> <p>A dry mouth can make wearing dentures uncomfortable.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Avoid drinking too many sugary drinks. Try to sip water regularly if your mouth feels dry.</li> <li>◆ Arrange to have your teeth checked regularly by a dentist.</li> <li>◆ Ask your Care Co-ordinator, CPN or Doctor about using an artificial saliva spray, (e.g. Glandosane spray).</li> <li>◆ Some people find that sucking sugar-free sweets or chewing sugar-free gum helps.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Constipation</b> (feeling unable to poo regularly)</p> 	<p>It is healthy to go to toilet (“poo”) roughly every 36 hours.</p> <p>Constipation can be very uncomfortable and make going to toilet painful.</p> <p>If you don’t go to toilet regularly, your back passage may become blocked, which can be serious.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Let your Care Co-ordinator, CPN or Doctor know about the problem.</li> <li>◆ Eating a healthy diet can stop you becoming constipated. Fruit and veg should make up a third of what you eat each day. Starchy foods, like wholemeal bread, pasta, brown rice and cereal, should make up another third.</li> <li>◆ Make sure you drink plenty as well. Water is best.</li> <li>◆ If changing your diet doesn’t help, or you are in pain, your Doctor may be able to prescribe you a medication (e.g. lactulose, Fibogel) to help you go to toilet regularly.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Unable to wee</b></p> 	<p>Can be serious if nothing is done about it.</p> <p>The problem is more common in men.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ If you are a man and you are getting older, your Doctor will need to check whether you have got prostate problems that may be stopping you weeing.</li> <li>◆ If the problem is mild, your Doctor might talk to you about reducing the dose of your medication.</li> <li>◆ If you take a medication to prevent movement problems (e.g. procyclidine), reducing the dose, or seeing if you can manage without it, might help.</li> </ul>