



ABSOLUTE SCOOP

DID YOU KNOW?

Deprescribing is often recommended when a medication may be causing an unwanted side effect, is no longer providing benefit, or is no longer being used.



DEPRESCRIBING

Written by Katelyn Malena, PharmD Candidate, Class of 2024

At some point, you may have wondered “Why are they reducing or stopping this medication? Doesn’t my family member need this to keep them healthy?” This article will help shed light on the topic of deprescribing.

What is Deprescribing?

Deprescribing is the act of decreasing the dose of a medication or stopping them altogether. When deciding if a medication should be reduced or stopped, the healthcare team (pharmacists, doctors, nurses, etc.) will provide an individualized approach and weigh the benefits and risks to determine what is best. These changes are often recommended when a medication may be causing an unwanted side effect, is no longer providing benefit, or is no longer being used.

The Beers Criteria

Some common reasons for deprescribing include increased falling, confusion, bleeding, or dizziness. The American Geriatric Society released a list of medications that have a higher risk of causing side effects in the geriatric population, called the Beers Criteria or Beers List. Some examples of medications on this list are:

- **Proton pump inhibitors** (Ex: pantoprazole and omeprazole): Commonly used for reflux or heartburn. These medications can increase the risk of infections and bone fractures.
- **Antipsychotics**: Commonly used to improve mood or behaviors in those with dementia. These medications can increase the risk of stroke and death in the elderly.
- **Anticholinergics**: A large group of medications that include antidepressants, allergy medications, medications for urinary incontinence, and muscle relaxants. These medications increase the risk of dizziness, blurry vision, confusion, and falls.
- **Sliding-scale insulin**: Commonly used to treat diabetes. The use of a sliding scale increases the risk of low blood sugar levels and falls.
- **Benzodiazepines**: Commonly used to treat anxiety and insomnia. These medications increase the risk of confusion, falls, and bone fractures.

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Common Concerns

- **Fear of Medication Changes:** It is understandable to be concerned when long-term medications are being changed. A team of pharmacists, nurses, and prescribers are working together to provide excellent care to your loved one. They consider your loved one's health conditions, medication list, health status, and goals when making decisions.
- **Worsening Symptoms:** You may be concerned that previous symptoms will return once the medication is stopped. Your loved one will be closely monitored for these symptoms and changes to the plan will be made, if needed.
- **Lack of Understanding:** Medication therapy can be a complex topic. Feel free to reach out to your relative's healthcare team with any questions or concerns.
- **Maintaining Quality of Life:** Deprescribing can decrease unwanted side effects and reduce the number of medications being consumed. This may improve their overall quality of life.

**If you have any questions, please reach out to your
Consultant Pharmacist or Account Manager.**

About the Author



*Outside of Work,
Katelyn enjoys baking,
traveling, and spending
time with family and
friends.*

Katelyn Malena is a pharmacy student at the University of Findlay. She will graduate in May of 2024 with her Doctorate in Pharmacy and Minor in Chemistry. In the future, she hopes to work closely with patients to manage their diabetic medications. In her free time, Katelyn enjoys baking, traveling, and spending time with family and friends.

**What do you call an
Irish Spider?**

Paddy Long Legs



**Why are all leprechauns
good gardeners?**

They have green thumbs.