

A FOCUS ON DEPRESCRIBING


Deprescribing is the process of withdrawal of an inappropriate medication, supervised by a health care professional with the goal of managing polypharmacy and improving outcomes.

WHY DEPRESCRIBE?

- Older patients often end up taking many medications
- As people age, medications that were once effective and safe may no longer be so
- Frail elderly are more prone to adverse effects
- Use of inappropriate medications is associated with increased risk of many adverse health outcomes such as falls and hospitalizations

WHEN TO DEPRESCRIBE?

Deprescribing can be considered when the potential benefit of a drug is outweighed by harm, or when a drug is no longer indicated. See below for a guide on medication utility as it relates to deprescribing decision-making.

| UTILITY | MEDICATIONS THAT: | EXAMPLES: |
|---|---|--|
|  <p>MORE USEFUL</p> | Provide immediate relief for distressing symptoms | analgesics, antiemetics |
| | Modify an acute condition that is life-threatening , or will soon result in distressing symptoms if not treated | antibiotics for severe pneumonia or sepsis, diuretics for acute heart failure |
| | Modify a chronic condition that may progress to become life-threatening or cause significant symptoms if not treated | methotrexate for rheumatoid conditions |
| | Have the potential to prevent a serious disease , without symptomatic benefit | antiplatelet agents, antihypertensives |
| | Are unlikely to be useful in either short or long term | fish oils, vitamins, glucosamine |
| | LESS USEFUL | Are used for indications where non-pharmacological therapy is equally or more effective |

**Adapted from A Guide to Deprescribing. Consultant Pharmacy Services.*

Ensure that the resident is well informed. Residents should be advised that deprescribing is intended to improve their quality of life by ensuring that they do not receive unnecessary medicines with either no or minimal benefit and/or some potential for harm.

For additional resources, please speak with your MediSystem pharmacist.

MediSystem™
Pharmacy

A SHOPPERS DRUG MART COMPANY

medisystempharmacy.com

References available upon request.