


**The Capsule**
  
**June 2021**

**Backordered Meds**

- Unasyn 1.5gm
- Dexilant 60mg
- Gentamicin Ophthalmic Oint.

**New Generics**

- Brinzolamide Opth. Susp.  
(brand name: Azopt Opth.)



“Darling, I wish you’d stop the self defense classes, now you’ve got Alzheimer’s.”

**Caregivers Roll in Alzheimer’s Management**

Alzheimer’s disease is a progressive condition and behaviors will likely worsen over time. Although the destruction of brain cells is the main catalyst for behavioral changes, other things can impact the disease process such as medications, infections, environmental changes, hearing loss and stress.

Common personality and behavior changes	Non-pharmacological Interventions
Depressive symptoms/loss of interest in things	Redirection
Hallucinations/Paranoia	Music Therapy
Pacing	Simple tasks such as folding rags
Aggression or hitting people	Sit and comfort the resident
Diminished personal hygiene	Getting out of bed and attending activities

- ❖ During annual survey, surveyors will inquire about non-drug interventions done by staff and will check to make sure these interventions are in place and documented before pharmacological (antidepressants, antipsychotics, anxiolytics, and mood stabilizing drugs) means are used. Surveyors will also inquire if the consultant pharmacist and providers are attempting gradual dose reductions to discover the lowest possible therapeutic dosages of the fewest number of psychotropic medications. We never want medications to be used as a chemical restraint.
- ❖ The caregivers roll in this process is to document behaviors that are occurring so that proper medication selection can be made. It is of equal importance for caregivers to be there for the resident to provide support, comfort, routine, and empathy. Caregivers are essential in the early identification of changes in the resident and notifying providers so they can determine if there is a correctible medical condition such as a UTI. Although they cannot always express it, you are their world!

## Alzheimer's Medication List

Drug Name	Drug Type and Use	How It Works	Common Side Effects
<b>Aricept® (donepezil)</b>	Cholinesterase inhibitor prescribed to treat symptoms of mild, moderate, and severe Alzheimer's	Prevents the breakdown of acetylcholine in the brain	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, muscle cramps, fatigue, weight loss
<b>Exelon® (rivastigmine)</b>	Cholinesterase inhibitor prescribed to treat symptoms of mild to moderate Alzheimer's (patch is also for severe Alzheimer's)	Prevents the breakdown of acetylcholine and butyrylcholine (a brain chemical similar to acetylcholine) in the brain	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, indigestion, muscle weakness
<b>Namenda® (memantine)</b>	N-methyl D-aspartate (NMDA) antagonist prescribed to treat symptoms of moderate to severe Alzheimer's	Blocks the toxic effects associated with excess glutamate and regulates glutamate activation	Dizziness, headache, diarrhea, constipation, confusion
<b>Namzaric® (memantine and donepezil)</b>	NMDA antagonist and cholinesterase inhibitor prescribed to treat symptoms of moderate to severe Alzheimer's	Blocks the toxic effects associated with excess glutamate and prevents the breakdown of acetylcholine in the brain	Headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, anorexia
<b>Razadyne® (galantamine)</b>	Cholinesterase inhibitor prescribed to treat symptoms of mild to moderate Alzheimer's	Prevents the breakdown of acetylcholine and stimulates nicotinic receptors to release more acetylcholine in the brain	Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, decreased appetite, dizziness, headache

- ❖ Medications are generally started at lower doses and are increased gradually based on how well a treatment is tolerated. There is evidence that certain groups benefit from higher doses of cholinesterase inhibitors, but side effects are more likely with elevated doses.

**Resources:** <https://alzheimersdisease.net/nondrugtreatmentoptions;>  
<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/how-alzheimers-disease-treated>