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Feedback

We welcome any suggestions you have, please send your **comments, concerns, complaints and compliments** to: Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, **PALS, Complaints and Claims Team**, 1829 Building, Liverpool Road, Chester, CH2 1HJ.

For more information see www.cwp.nhs.uk

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Atomoxetine for ADHD

Information for parents and carers

Medication for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Atomoxetine is one of the medications used to treat ADHD. In our trust it is used as a second line treatment. This means it is used for young people who have not responded to stimulant medication or where young people are unable to take stimulant medications because of side-effects or a medical problem. The brand name of Atomoxetine is Strattera.

What are the benefits?

Atomoxetine improves the core symptoms of ADHD e.g. hyperactivity, impulsivity and inattention.

What does the medicine do?

This medication is not a cure - it does not affect the underlying disorder but it does help to relieve the symptoms. It is not a sedative. The exact way in which it works is uncertain but Atomoxetine increases the level of noradrenaline which is one of the chemicals that cells in the brain use to transmit signals to each other.

Unlike stimulant medications Atomoxetine has a continuous effect over the full 24 hour period and is taken once a day. Unlike stimulants it takes some weeks to build up to its full effect.

Guidance for the medications

- An adult needs to have responsibility for the medication at all times.
- Atomoxetine should be taken every day.
- Do not give more than the prescribed dose.
- Store the tablets in a cool dry place, out of the reach of children.
- If you forget to give a dose, give the next dose at the normal time - do not give an extra dose.
- It is essential to contact your family doctor or the A&E department if more than the prescribed dose is taken either accidentally or intentionally.
- Atomoxetine may interact with some other medicines. It is important that you tell your doctor about any other medications that your child is taking.

What are the side effects?

The most common side effects are reduced appetite, stomach ache, feeling or being sick and changes in sleep pattern. These usually last only a short time. There are many other possible side-effects and these are listed on the information sheet which comes with the medication.

Two rare but potentially serious side-effects are:

1. Risk of liver problems (estimated at fewer than one in 50,000 patients treated). Symptoms of liver problems include pain on the right side of the stomach just below the

ribs, unexplained nausea, flu-like symptoms, dark urine and yellowing of the eyes (jaundice).

2. There have been reports of depression, suicidal thoughts or behaviours in people taking Atomoxetine. You should inform your doctor of any worsening of mood, agitation or suicidal thoughts.

If you have any concerns about side-effects or interactions with other medication you will need to check this with your doctor.

Monitoring

People taking Atomoxetine need to be monitored regularly by their doctor. Weight, height, blood pressure and pulse are checked every six months.

Are there any alternatives to Atomoxetine?

If the doctor is discussing Atomoxetine with you it is likely that stimulants have been ineffective, had significant side effects or are otherwise inappropriate for your child.

Some other medications can be effective in ADHD but stimulants and Atomoxetine are the most effective and the only ones recommended by NICE (National Institute of Clinical Excellence).