

## Medication Safety and Second Generation Antipsychotics

Medicines can help people with mental health problems. As with all drugs, medicines for mental health problems should be used with care. If these drugs are not used correctly, they can be harmful.

One type of drug, called a second generation antipsychotic (SGA), can be very helpful in reducing symptoms, and has fewer side effects than some older drugs. However, this type of drug can pose special risks.

Here are a few tips to help you take these medicines safely.

- Tell your doctor about all of the medications that you take, including over-the-counter medications and herbal and vitamin supplements.
- Be sure your doctor asks about your health carefully before you start taking these medicines. Your doctor may review your health and family health history to decide if these medicines are right for you.
- Be sure to see your doctor regularly and to discuss your health with your doctor at every visit while you are taking the medicines. Your doctor may want to review your metabolism, including:
  - Blood sugar and fat levels
  - Levels of certain hormones, such as Prolactin when taking Risperdal
  - Total weight and waist measurement
  - Heart rate and blood pressure
- Follow a rigorous exercise program and eat a healthful diet while taking these medicines.
- If you notice you are gaining weight or having any side effects while taking these medicines, be sure to tell your doctor.
- Take the medicines exactly as directed. Don't change how much you take and don't stop taking these medicines without talking to your doctor first.

### Medication Safety in Children and Teenagers

Second generation antipsychotic medicines are also used in treating children and teenagers. As with adults, it is important for the doctor to review the family history and test results of the child or teen before having them start on the medicines. The doctor should review this information at every visit while the child or teen is taking them.

### Resources Are Available

Additional information, self-help tools and other resources are available online at [www.MagellanHealth.com](http://www.MagellanHealth.com). Or call us for more information, help and support. Counselors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide confidential assistance at no cost to you.