



Health & Safety Alert #38-12-06

Exceeding Manufacturer's Recommended Dose

The purpose of this Alert is to heighten the awareness of providers and county boards to a concern noted by the Mortality Review Committee in several case reviews regarding receiving doses of medication higher than the manufacturer's maximum recommended dosage. The higher dosage is sometimes seen with atypical antipsychotic medication and with SSRI antidepressants.

Guardians, providers, and families should discuss with the physician the potential side effects and benefit/risk ratio of exceeding the manufacturer's recommended maximum dose.

Staff should closely monitor individuals who receive increased dosages for:

1. Changes in levels of alertness, abilities.
2. Changes in ability to walk or sit upright.
3. Changes in eating.
4. Changes in speech or vocalizations.
5. Changes in abilities to perform daily activities.

Alert the physician when you see any of the above changes.

Persons responsible for the individual's health care should also ensure that appropriate monitoring of liver function tests along with drug and metabolic levels are performed. Serum ammonia levels can help diagnose occult liver disease even in the absence of toxic drug levels but this testing is not routine and requires special testing.

Don't be afraid to ask on behalf of the individual

For questions or comments regarding the above Alert, please contact the MUI/Registry Unit at (614) 995-3810.

DECEMBER 2006