

What is it?

Second Generation Antipsychotics (SGAs) are a type of medication used to treat some of the mental health conditions for children and adults. They are also called atypical antipsychotic medications. Some examples are Olanzapine, Quetiapine and Risperidone. Your doctor will tell you if your child has been prescribed an SGA.

Effects

In children and youth, SGAs are usually used to treat symptoms like:

- ▶ aggression
- ▶ behavioural difficulties
- ▶ mood instability
- ▶ inability to tell apart reality from imagination (psychosis)

Research in adults and adolescents has shown that SGAs reduce the severity of psychotic and manic symptoms. Research in children with autism has shown that certain SGAs help reduce aggression. More research is needed to fully understand appropriate use and impact.

Side-Effects

There are several possible side-effects that can happen for some children and youth who take SGAs including:

- ▶ Weight Gain (especially around the belly)
- ▶ High Blood Sugar
- ▶ High Blood Pressure
- ▶ High Cholesterol Level
 - High Triglycerides (a type of “bad” cholesterol)
 - Low HDL (a type of “good” cholesterol)

Together, these side-effects are called **Metabolic Syndrome** if 3 or more of them occur at the same time.

Monitoring & Preventing Side-Effects

The side-effects from SGAs can be monitored and treated even without any additional medications. You and your child’s health care team must work together to monitor your child’s side-effects.

Tell your health and mental health professionals if any family members have a history of risk factors such as high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, high blood sugar, diabetes, and large waist circumference.

The ways you and your team will check for side effects include:

- ▶ Measure:
 - **height**
 - **weight**
 - **waist circumference** (distance around your waist)
 - **blood pressure**
- ▶ Blood tests (before starting medication, and then 3, 6, and 12 months after starting medication)

Watch your child for these symptoms:

- ▶ Passing urine more frequently.
- ▶ Feeling tired all the time for no reason.
- ▶ Feeling more thirsty than usual.

Treating Side-Effects

Not every child who takes an SGA develops side-effects. If your child develops side-effects from SGAs, there are several ways to treat them. Treatment can include some, or all of the approaches listed below depending on your child’s situation:

- ▶ Lifestyle changes
 - Healthy eating
 - Exercise
 - Quit smoking or smoking cessation
- ▶ Removing or changing SGA medications.

- ▶ Additional medications for managing high blood sugar, blood pressure, and cholesterol levels.

* If you observe side-effects or for more information on treatment and coping with side-effects, please talk to your health and mental health providers.

Want to learn more?

General Mental Health Information:

<http://www.bcchildrens.ca/Services/ChildYouthMentalHlth/ProgramsAndServices/ChildPsychInptntUnit/Resources.htm>

<http://www.bcmhas.ca/keltyresourcecentre/supportcentre/kelty/default.htm>

Information About SGAs:

http://www.bcchildrens.ca/Services/ChildYouthMentalHlth/Medication_Information.htm

Dial A Dietician:

<http://www.dialadietitian.org/>

T) 1.800.667.3438



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BC Mental Health & Addiction Services

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www.bcmhas.ca

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Second Generation Antipsychotic (SGA) Medications & Metabolic Monitoring
