

Special Interest Articles:

- Alzheimer's Drugs
- Addyi
- Ranexa

Did you know?

Gabapentin is now prevalent as a drug of abuse. Individuals describe varying experiences with gabapentin abuse, including: euphoria, improved sociability, a marijuana-like "high", relaxation and a sense of calm. While Pregabalin is a controlled substance and has a similar pharmacological profile to gabapentin, gabapentin is not a controlled substance.

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Pharmacotherapy for Alzheimer's Disease

Pharmacotherapy options for Alzheimer's disease include the **cholinesterase inhibitors** donepezil (Aricept), rivastigmine (Exelon), and galantamine (Razadyne), and the **N-Methyl-D-Aspartate (NMDA) Antagonist**, memantine (Namenda). A cholinesterase inhibitor is often started for mild to moderate Alzheimer's then memantine is added when a patient gets worse. Only 1 in 12 patients on a cholinesterase inhibitor show any improvement. Plus 1 in 12 patients have significant side effects with cholinesterase inhibitors.

For donepezil, overdose information is limited. Based on its cholinergic effects, typical findings might include muscarinic actions consisting of: miosis, flushing, bradycardia, bronchospasm, increased bronchial secretions, involuntary urination

and/or defecation, sweating, lacrimation, hypotension, and/or seizures. The same effects would be expected with rivastigmine. In one case, an adult developed vomiting, bradycardia, hypertension, salivation, diaphoresis and drowsiness after ingesting 90 mg.

For memantine, for mild to moderate overdose, effects can include agitation, bradycardia, confusion, dizziness, hypertension, lethargy, restlessness, unsteady gait, vertigo, vomiting and weakness. For severe overdose, nystagmus, hallucinations, psychosis, seizures, and coma may be seen. A 35-year-old woman developed headache, dizziness, double vision, coma, tachycardia, hypertension, respiratory alkalosis, and seizures after ingesting 2000 mg of memantine.

F.D.A. Approves Addyi, a Libido Pill for Women

Addyi (add-ee) (flibanserin) 100 mg tablets, developed by Sprout Pharmaceuticals, was FDA-approved on August 18, 2015 for the treatment of acquired, generalized hypoactive sexual desire disorder (HSDD) in premenopausal women. **Flibanserin** is the first approved medication for HSDD, and is classified as a multifunctional serotonin agonist antagonist (MSAA). Flibanserin has been dubbed the "Female Viagra" and "the little pink pill"; however compared to Viagra, flibanserin has a distinctly different mechanism.

The proposed mechanism of action of flibanserin involves regulation of

several brain chemicals that may affect sexual desire, although the exact mechanism is not known. Flibanserin is a post-synaptic 5HT1A receptor agonist and 5HT2A receptor antagonist, as noted in FDA briefing documents, and has action in the central nervous system. The manufacturer states that flibanserin corrects an imbalance of dopamine and norepinephrine (both responsible for sexual excitement), while decreasing levels of serotonin (responsible for sexual satiety/inhibition). Flibanserin is not a hormonal drug and does not affect blood flow like the class of drugs approved for men with erectile dysfunction.

Difficult Drugs to Pronounce

Drugs in particular can be hard to spell, and often hard to pronounce. Companies can easily spend more than a year, sometimes two years, getting through the creative process, the trademark process, and then FDA approval process for new drugs. The FDA is getting particularly tough, rejecting about four out of every 10 name proposals, because it wants to avoid medication mix-ups that can lead to dangerous—sometimes deadly—adverse reactions. Below is a chart of often mispronounced drugs.

Drug Name	How do you say?
Acyclovir (Zovirax)	a SYE klo veer
Atorvastatin (Lipitor)	a TOR va sta tin
Benazepril (Lotensin)	ben AY ze pril
Candesartan (Atacand)	KAN-de-SAR-tan
Carisoprodol (Soma)	kar eye soe PROE dole
Carvedilol (Coreg)	KAR VAY dil ole
Celecoxib (Celebrex)	SEL e KOX ib
Cetirizine (Zyrtec)	se TIR a zeen
Clopidogrel (Plavix)	kloe PID oh grel
Dipyridamole (Persantine)	dye pir ID a mole
Diltiazem (Cardizem)	dil TYE a zem
Donepezil (Aricept)	doe NEP e zil
Escitalopram (Lexapro)	Eh sye TAL o pram
Eszopiclone (Lunesta)	e ZOPE i klone
Gemfibrozil (Lopid)	jem FYE broe zil
Levetiracetam (Keppra)	LEE vah tye RA se tam
Metronidazole (Flagyl)	me troe NI da zole
Montelukast (Singulair)	mon te LOO kast
Ropinirole (Requip)	roe PIN i role
Sympathomimetic	sim-puh-thoh-mi- met -ik
Tadalafil (Cialis)	ta DAL a fil
Triamterene/HCTZ (Dyazide)	try AM teh reen

Hear pronunciation on drugs.com

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Ranexa Used for Chronic Angina

Ranexa (ranolazine) is indicated for the treatment of chronic angina. It was approved in 2006 by FDA and was the first new pharmaceutical approach in over 20 years for chronic angina. Unlike other anti-anginal medications, Ranexa, which comes in extended-release tablets, does not lower heart rate or blood pressure. It helps heart cells generate energy more efficiently allowing the heart to function despite a decreased oxygen supply. Ranexa, when added to a beta-blocker or calcium channel blocker, helps to increase exercise duration. The most common adverse reactions in clinical trials of Ranexa include dizziness, headache, constipation and nausea. Significant QT prolongation may develop; however, there is limited experience with high doses (greater than 1000 mg twice daily) or exposure. Arrhythmia risk increases if it is combined with CYP3A4 inhibitors including diltiazem, verapamil, and grapefruit juice.