



REMEDY'SRx PRESS

Deprescribing

What is deprescribing?

Deprescribing refers to the process of reducing medications that are no longer needed or that may be causing harm, with the goal of improving safety and quality of life for residents.

In Canada:

- 2 in 3 seniors take 5 or more medications
- 1 in 4 seniors take 10 or more medications
- 1 in 4 seniors take a medication that is potentially inappropriate

The prevalence is even higher with age and those living in long-term care homes.

Multiple medications are associated with increased risk of:

- Non-adherence
- Adverse drug reactions (e.g. falls, declined cognition)
- Drug interactions
- Medication errors
- Hospitalizations

Prescribing cascade is common in seniors. An adverse drug reaction can sometimes be misinterpreted as a new medical condition, when in fact it is the result of starting a new medication. Another medication is then prescribed, and the patient is placed at risk of developing additional adverse effects relating to this potentially unnecessary medication.

Examples of prescribing cascades



To prevent a prescribing cascade any new signs and symptoms should always be considered as a possible consequence of an existing medication. If a side effect is developed from medication #1, consider stopping/changing medication #1 instead of starting medication #2.

10 reasons to deprescribe

1. Safe and feasible
2. Simplifies medication regimen
3. Reduces potential for adverse drug reactions
4. Reduces potential for drug interactions
5. Reduces potential for medication errors
6. Reduces hospitalizations
7. May not worsen existing conditions
8. Improves outcomes such as falls, behaviour, cognition and function
9. Saves medication cost
10. Improves quality of life

Medications to consider deprescribing

- Medications that are not actually taken
- Medications that are no longer indicated
- Medications that are no longer appropriate
- Medications that no longer align with the resident's goals

DID YOU KNOW?



- Stopping unnecessary medications is often overlooked, but an important component of resident care.
- It can be difficult to know which medication, if any, to stop. In some circumstances, the only way to know whether a medication is still needed is to actually stop it and see what happens.



Tips

- Regularly evaluate the need for a medication
- View the discontinuation process as a trial
- Collaborate with residents, family members, and the healthcare team
- Time needed to taper varies from days to weeks to months
- Be flexible
- Speak with your Remedy'sRx Pharmacist

Remedy'sRx Deprescribing Initiative is coming soon!

The objective is to reduce the risks associated with multiple medication use. It involves a step-wise process using an evidence-based approach to medication reduction. The initiative is rolled out in phases, focusing on classes of medications that are commonly continued in residents and are no longer needed, such as:

- Proton pump inhibitors
- Statins
- Benzodiazepines