

Information sheet for parents and young people

ATOMOXETINE / STRATTERA

What is Strattera (Atomoxetine)?

Strattera (Atomoxetine) is used to help control the symptoms of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD – inability to pay attention and impulsiveness and hyperactivity) in children and adolescents. Atomoxetine increases the levels of noradrenaline, a natural chemical in the brain. It has a slow onset of action with the maximum effect peaking at 6-8 weeks. To reduce the likelihood of side effects, we use a low starting dose and reach the target dose in 3 or 4 weeks.

Atomoxetine is supplied as STRATTERA capsules in 10, 18, 25, 40 and 60mg strengths.

Treatment protocol (to be confirmed by doctor)

Starting dose	Approximately 0.5mg/kg body weight
Increase	Weekly intervals to maximum dose in 3-4 weeks, depending on response
Schedule	Daily dose given in one or two doses, depending on response
Timing	Morning usually (or evening) with or without food
Usual dose	1.2-1.8mg/kg body weight

Drug interactions

Lower doses may be needed if taken with SSRIs (e.g. Fluoxetine). Can be taken safely with usual antibiotics, asthma medications and Paracetamol.

Contraindications

Should not be taken with Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitor (MAOI) drugs or by patients with narrow angle glaucoma.

Cautions

Dose reduction needed if patient has impaired liver function.

Monitoring

Before treatment, we will measure height, weight and blood pressure and will check these at regular intervals during treatment.

Side effects

The most commonly reported side effects are tummy discomfort, such as nausea, indigestion and decreased appetite. These can be prevented by starting with a lower dose and/or taking medication at night.

Other side effects are uncommon in children. Very rarely, liver problems have been reported. Symptoms of liver problems include pain on the right side of the stomach just below the ribs, unexplained nausea (feeling sick), "flu-like" symptoms, dark urine and yellowing of eyes or skin (jaundice). In adult studies, there were reports of dry mouth, constipation and sexual dysfunction in a small number of people.

Please let the clinic know as soon as possible if you have any concerns about possible side effects or questions about treatment. For advice, please telephone the secretary for the clinic you attend, giving details of your concerns, and the doctor will contact you as soon as possible

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Acknowledged to Dr S Keen

March 2006