ADHD Medications - Alpha adrenergic agonists

Specific medications:
- Clonidine (Catapres)
- Clonidine extended release (Kapvay)
- Clonidine Transdermal System (Catapres-TTS)
- Guanfacine (Tenex)
- Guanfacine extended release (Intuniv)

Use:
- Treatment of symptoms of attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity
- Treatment of high blood pressure

Risks and side effects:
- Weakness, fatigue
- Light-headedness, dizziness upon standing
- Slow heart rate, lowered blood pressure, irregular heartbeat
- Weight gain
- Nervousness or agitation
- Depression
- Nightmares
- Nausea, vomiting, stomach pain, liver problems
- Sexual dysfunction
- Muscle and joint pain
- Dry mouth, nasal passages, and eyes.
- Allergic reactions, rashes

Though most medication side effects are not dangerous, they can rarely be medically serious or even life threatening. Let your doctor know if you notice any changes in your health.

Expected onset of action: It can take up to two weeks for the alpha adrenergic agents to have their full effect.

Use in pregnancy: Although birth defects in humans have not been reported, the full effect of these medications on developing babies is not known. It is safest to use birth control while taking these medications. Let your doctor know if you may be or wish to become pregnant.

Interactions with other drugs and food: Alpha adrenergic medication increases the effects of alcohol and sedative drugs. Street drugs and alcohol should be avoided while taking these medications. These agents can have serious interactions with other medications such as ketoconizole, divalproex (Depakote), and carbamazepine (Tegretol). Tell your doctor about all the medications you are taking.

Laboratory monitoring: Laboratory monitoring is generally not necessary. Your doctor may recommend you get an EKG and regular blood pressure checks while taking these medications.

Discontinuation effects: If these medications are stopped suddenly, you may experience agitation, nervousness, or an increase in blood pressure. If the increase in blood pressure is severe, this can be very dangerous and can cause stroke. Always consult your doctor before changing the dosage of your medication. These discontinuation effects can be avoided by tapering the medication slowly under your doctor’s supervision.

I acknowledge that I have discussed this information with my doctor and have received a copy of this form for my records.

Individual Served: ____________________________ Date: ________________

Physician: ____________________________ Date: ________________
[ ] Copy given for guardian.