

Harmony Foundation, Inc.  
**ADMIT DRUG INFORMATION**

**A very brief outline of commonly used medications in the treatment of substance abuse**

**Carbamazepine** (Tegretol): *Anticonvulsant*. Used in alcohol withdrawal, seizure disorders, bipolar disorder, nerve pain, and psychotic disorders. **Possible side effects** – Drowsiness, fatigue, headache, dry mouth, nausea, and ringing in the ears. **Other info** - Don't use during pregnancy or in combination with MAOI's, or lithium. Take with food or milk to decrease any stomach irritation.

**Chlordiazepoxide** (Librium): *Anti-anxiety agent*. Used in acute alcohol withdrawal symptoms, anxiety, panic disorder, tremors, tension headache. **Possible side effects** – Drowsiness, somnolence, dizziness, nausea, and confusion. **Other info** – Don't use if pregnant; smoking reduces effectiveness; don't use during acute alcohol intoxication or with glaucoma; caution/low dose with kidney or liver problems. Take with food or milk.

**Atenolol** (Tenormin): *Antihypertensive* (Anti high blood pressure). Used to control mild to moderate hypertension, tremors, and alcohol withdrawal. **Possible side effects** – Dizziness when standing quickly, fatigue, insomnia, drowsiness, strange dreams, depression, nausea, decreased libido, sore throat and stuffy nose. **Other info** – Don't use during pregnancy, with Raynauds disease, with heart failure or pulmonary edema. When used with cough and cold medicines, it inhibits the effects of both medications i.e., mutual inhibition. Take before meals or before bed.

**Clonidine** (Catapres): *Antihypertensive*. Used for hypertension, opioid withdrawal, ADHD, prevention of migraine headaches and dysmenorrhea. **Possible side effects** – drowsiness, fatigue, palpitations, nausea, dry mouth, rash, dizziness when standing quickly, and anxiety. **Other info** – Precautions with pregnancy, diabetes, kidney failure, Raynauds disease, depression, and asthma. Don't use with anticoagulants.

**Thiamine** (Vitamin B1): *Water soluble vitamin*. Used to prevent and treat the depletion of thiamine related to chronic alcohol use. **Other info** - No known cautions except with Wernicke's encephalopathy.

**Magnesium oxide** (Mag-Ox): *Anticonvulsant, antacid & laxative*. Restores and maintains the electrolyte magnesium within cells which is needed for nerve conduction and muscle contraction. Magnesium is commonly depleted related to chronic alcohol use. **Possible side effects** – Muscle weakness, nausea, vomiting, and cramps. In patients that are depleted in magnesium, these side effects are rare and usually only occur when magnesium levels are abnormally high or low.

**Promethazine** (Phenergan): *Antiemetic, antihistamine & sedative-hypnotic*. Prevents and relieves nausea & vomiting, prevents histamine related allergic responses. **Possible side effects** – disorientation, somnolence, dry mouth/nose/throat, flushing, wheezing, and stomach pain. **Other Info** - Administered via hypodermic needle into deep muscle tissue such as gluteal area due to caustic effect of medication. Can cause localized discomfort at injection site.

**Buprenorphine** (Subutex): *Opioid analgesic, partial agonist (enhancer)*. Depresses pain impulses at the spinal cord level by interacting with opioid receptors, used for moderate to severe pain. **Possible side effects**-drowsiness, dizziness, confusion, headache, increased intracranial pressure, palpitations, respiratory depression, nausea, blurred vision, urinary changes, and changes in blood pressure. **Other Info**-At Harmony, we administer this medication in the oral sublingual form (under the tongue) to ease the detoxification of clients who have become dependent on opioids. This medication is metabolized in the liver and increases the effects of alcohol and other depressants, therefore it is not used for clients with a recent history of alcohol or CNS depressant abuse. The patient is to remain in view of the nursing staff until the tablet is completely dissolved, 3-5 minutes.

*As with all medications, it is important to take the recommended dosages as directed by the physician. Adhere to your scheduled medication times and take the full course of treatment as prescribed. Abruptly stopping some medications or missing doses can cause very adverse effects. All students at Harmony are responsible for coming to the Nursing Station for their medications and vital signs. If you are unsure of your schedule, or have any questions about your medications, please don't hesitate to ask any member of the medical staff. We are here for you!*

Please report any signs or symptoms of withdrawal such as: tremors, nausea, vomiting, hallucinations, sweating, palpitations, anxiety, agitation, or confusion...anything out of the ordinary for you!

Thank you and let us know if there is anything we can do to improve your treatment experience.

*-The Nursing Staff-*

All medication information taken from: Mosby's 2008 Nursing Drug Guide or Saunders 2007 Nursing Drug Handbook – Paraphrased by John McMillan, LPN