

Lyrica (pregabalin)

Lyrica is a medication for seizures which is also FDA-approved for pain conditions (diabetic neuropathic pain and post-herpetic neuralgia). It has also been found to help anxiety, particularly generalized anxiety. It has been approved for this purpose in Europe but not America. In a review of anxiety treatments conducted at Duke University, Lyrica was found to have the strongest treatment effects (usually at 300mg/day). Lyrica has also been used to help people come off addictive drugs, such as benzodiazepines (valium, ativan, xanax, klonopin) and alcohol, though Lyrica is not addictive itself. Lyrica can deepen sleep quality and should be taken at night.

Mechanism

Enhances the release GABA, a neurotransmitter involved in anxiety. Lyrica works similarly to Neurontin (gabapentin) and Gabitril (tiagabine).

Dosing

Lyrica has a half life of 6 hours, so it tends to come out of your system after 6 hours, but the benefits often continue throughout the day even when taken once/day. It is best to take at night. Supplied in 25 mg, 50 mg, 75 mg, 100 mg, 150 mg, 200 mg, 225 mg, and 300 mg capsules.

Side Effects

Dizziness (about 30%) and sedation/fatigue (22%). Blurred vision, weight gain of about 5 pounds on average, swelling (edema), and impaired concentration/attention.

Can cause a withdrawal syndrome of nausea, insomnia and headache if not gradually tapered.

Interactions

No significant ones. Lyrica is not metabolized by the liver, is excreted unchanged by the kidney.

Costs

Lyrica is brand only. There may be coupons at www.lyrica.com. If you have trouble with your insurance paying for it you can email us at auth@moodtreatmentcenter.com and we may be able to help with that.

–Updated 3/27/2015 by Chris Aiken, MD