

The Carlat Psychiatry Report

NAMENDA (memantine) Fact Sheet

Manufacturer: Forest Labs; market exclusivity expires 2008.

Indications:

- Moderate to severe Alzheimer's dementia.
- Off-label use for mild to moderate dementia.

Mechanism: NMDA antagonist, works by preventing too much glutamate from damaging neurons.

Dosing:

- Supplied as:
 - 5 mg tan and 10 mg gray tablets
 - 2 mg/mL oral solution
- Start at 5 mg QD for 1 week, then 5 mg BID for 1 week, then 10 mg QAM and 5 mg QPM for 1 week, and finally 10 mg BID (target dose).
- No dose adjustment needed in hepatic impairment; decrease dose in severe renal impairment.

Side Effects:

- Most common: dizziness, sedation, transient confusion.
- Pregnancy risk category B.

Drug-drug interactions:

- No significant interactions reported.

Pharmacokinetics:

- Metabolized partly by liver; half is excreted unchanged in the urine.

Laboratory monitoring:

- None required

Pearls:

- Namenda mildly augments the effects of Aricept in clinical trials (*JAMA* 2004;291:317-324).
- Probably less effective for mild dementia; this indication was rejected by the FDA in 2005.