

# NUPLAZID (Pimavanserin) and Parkinson's Disease Psychosis

## Q: What is Parkinson's Disease Psychosis (PDP)?

Psychosis is an illness where patients may lose touch with reality. Psychosis is a frequent complication of Parkinson's disease (PD).

Because PD is an ongoing illness,  $\geq 50\%$  of patients develop psychosis eventually. It can even be provoked by the drugs used to treat the movement symptoms of PD.

## Q: What are the symptoms of PDP?

- Hallucinations – Feeling, hearing, smelling, tasting, or seeing things that are not noticed by other people.
- Delusions – Having strong false beliefs that do not change with reasoning.

## Q: What medications are approved for treatment of PDP?

- Nuplazid (pimavanserin) is the only medication FDA-approved for treating PDP. Nuplazid is an antipsychotic that can improve PDP without worsening movement symptoms as much as other antipsychotics.
- Other medications used for PDP are "off-label" (used without FDA approval).

## Q: How is Nuplazid dosed?

Nuplazid comes in only 2 doses: 34mg oral capsules and 10mg oral tablets.

- Standard adult dose: (one) 34 mg capsule by mouth daily.
- Adults who take other medication(s) that lower their ability to clear Nuplazid may receive a lower dose of (one) 10 mg tablet by mouth daily.

## Q: If Nuplazid is an antipsychotic, do residents have to attempt lower doses periodically?

PDP is considered an "enduring" condition because the illness is expected to continue or even progress indefinitely.

As a medication that treats an enduring condition, Nuplazid may be exempted from the "Gradual Dose Reduction" (GDR) rule.

Talk to your Consultant Pharmacist for more information on proper documentation regarding GDRs!

## Q: Many of our PDP residents have trouble swallowing. How can we administer Nuplazid to residents with swallowing difficulties?

- Nuplazid capsules may be opened and the entire contents sprinkled over a tablespoon of applesauce, yogurt, pudding, or a liquid nutritional supplement.
- Give this drug/food mixture to the resident immediately and advise them not to chew.

