

Questions to Ask before Starting Antipsychotic Medications

What is the indication, condition or target symptom(s)?

Is any testing necessary to confirm a diagnosis?

Could any medications already prescribed or comorbid conditions the resident has be causally related to a target symptom?

What safety goals must be considered, and is the resident currently exhibiting dangerous behavior?

Has behavior modification been tried or can a psychosocial or behavior treatment be started immediately?

Who is providing informed consent for any new medication?

Have medications other than antipsychotics received adequate trials?

What baseline and follow-up monitoring will be recommended with an antipsychotic medication?

Does the resident have a medical condition (recognized by national guidelines or standards) that supports the use of antipsychotic treatment in this case?

How will use of the antipsychotic medication be documented?

What endpoints for antipsychotic treatment will be considered within the first six months?

Original source: “The Use of Antipsychotic Medication in Long Term Care,” published in *Medicine & Health/Rhode Island*, written by Gary Epstein-Lubow, MD and Andrew Rosenzweig, MD, MPH