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INFORMATION ON ZOPICLONE

What is Zopiclone?

Zopiclone is a type of sleeping pill which works by acting on the brain to cause sleepiness. Dr. Donovan will prescribe it to patients for several reasons, including sleeping difficulties associated with the use of higher doses of prednisone.

How should I use Zopiclone?

- Use 7.5 mg immediately before going to bed
- Do not drive a car for 12 hours after using in case it makes one excessively drowsy.
- Avoid alcohol use in the event this also adds to the drowsiness. Zopiclone is not to be used with alcohol.

How long will I use Zopiclone?

- Dr. Donovan will generally prescribe for 10 days. Ongoing use does require re-evaluation beyond 10 days. Treatment is not used long term because the risk of dependence increases with the duration of treatment.
- This type of dependence is still rare. In two sleep laboratory studies involving 17 patients, there was an absence of tolerance with zopiclone for treatment periods of more than 4 weeks.

Who should not use Zopiclone?

Zopiclone may not be prescribed to patients who have any of these health issues

1. Mental illness
2. Liver disease
3. Kidney disease
4. Breathing problems
5. Currently using anti-depressants, sedating antihistamines, anti-anxiety medications

Zopiclone is also not used during pregnancy.

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What are the side effects of Zopiclone?

About 1 % to 10 % will experience these side effects:

- Feeling drowsy
- Dry mouth
- Metallic or bitter taste in mouth

About 0.1 % to 1 % will experience these side effects:

- Nausea/vomiting
- Headaches
- Nightmares
- Agitation
- Reduced concentration

Less than 0.1 % will experience these side effects:

- Feeling confused
- Hives
- Reduced libido (sex drive)
- Shortness of breath
- Indigestion
- Dependence on the drug
- Muscle weakness

