

Adjunct Medications for Opioid Withdrawal

Ask the patient which symptom is most distressing and treat that one first.

General Population (Adults and Youth)

Dosing is the same for adults and youth >43 kg. Look up appropriate dosing for patients <43 kg.

Opioid Withdrawal, Hypertension or Tachycardia

- Clonidine 0.1 mg PO once, may repeat every hour as needed, up to a total of 4 doses
- Tizanidine 2 mg PO every 4 hours, either scheduled or as needed

Agitation or Anxiety

- Clonidine 0.1 mg PO once, may repeat every hour as needed, up to a total of 4 doses
- Hydroxyzine 25-50 mg PO every 6 hours as needed
- Olanzapine 5-10 mg PO or IM once
- Ziprasidone 10-20 mg PO or IM once
- Haloperidol 2.5-5 mg PO, IV or IM once
- Lorazepam 1-2 mg PO, IV or IM every 4-6 hours as needed

Nausea

- Ondansetron 4-8 mg PO or IV every 4-8 hours as needed
- Prochlorperazine 5-10 mg PO or IV every 6-8 hours as needed
- Metoclopramide 10 mg PO or IV every 4-6 hours as needed

Abdominal Cramping

- Dicyclomine 20 mg PO every 6 hours as needed

Pain

- Gabapentin 300 mg PO every 8 hours, may titrate up to 900 mg every 8 hours
- Ketamine 0.1-0.3 mg/kg IV every 30 minutes as needed
- Acetaminophen 325-650 mg PO or IV every 4-6 hours as needed
- Ibuprofen 600-800 mg PO every 6-8 hours as needed
- Ketorolac 15 mg IV or 30 mg IM once

Considerations

Use caution when giving the patient multiple different medications that can suppress respiratory drive.

Medications used to sedate an agitated patient or keep them from behavior that poses harm to themselves, or others, may be considered a chemical restraint.

Program partners

Washington State Health Care Authority

ADAI
ADDITIONS, DRUG &
ALCOHOL INSTITUTE

UW Medicine
DEPARTMENT OF
EMERGENCY MEDICINE

W UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
PSYCHIATRY & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
Psychiatry Consultation Line (PCL)

Pregnant Individuals

Opioid Withdrawal, Hypertension or Tachycardia

- Tizanidine 2 mg PO every 4 hours, either scheduled or as needed

Agitation or Anxiety

- Tizanidine 2 mg PO every 4 hours, either scheduled or as needed
- Gabapentin 300 mg PO every 4 hours as needed
- Diphenhydramine 25 mg PO or IV. May repeat x1 in 30 minutes for total dose of 50mg. Then 25-50 mg PO or IV q 6 hours as needed.

Nausea

- Doxylamine 10-20 mg PO every 8 hours as needed

Abdominal Cramping

- Dicyclomine 20 mg PO every 4-6 hours as needed

Pain

- Acetaminophen 650 mg PO or IV every 4-6 hours as needed

Lactating Individuals

Opioid Withdrawal, Hypertension or Tachycardia

- Tizanidine 2 mg PO every 4 hours either scheduled or as needed

Agitation or Anxiety

- Gabapentin 300 mg PO every 4 hours as needed

Nausea

- Ondansetron 4 mg PO or IV every 6 hours as needed
- Doxylamine 10-20 mg, 1-2 tablets every 8 hours as needed. Second line option; large doses may affect milk supply.

Pain

- Acetaminophen 650 mg PO or IV every 4-6 hours as needed

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