

The following medication chart is provided as a brief guide to some of the medications used in the management of various behavior disorders, along with their potential benefits and possible side effects. It is included to help school personnel understand the effects and potential side effects of the medications already prescribed for their students. It is not meant to suggest medical management for any student.

Medications Used in the Management of Disruptive Behavior Disorders

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MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Short Acting Stimulants			
Ritalin (methylphenidate)	Inattention and hyperactivity associated with ADHD, Autism, Tourette Syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attention span. • Decreased distractibility and motor restlessness. • Decreased impulsivity. • Takes effect within an hour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May decrease appetite. • May cause insomnia. • Can precipitate underlying emotional problems, such as bipolar disorder.
Dexedrine (dextroamphetamine)			

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Long Acting Stimulants			
Ritalin SR or LA, Concerta, Methylin ER or CD, Focalin, Metadate ER, (methylphenidate)	Inattention and hyperactivity associated with ADHD, Autism, Tourette Syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased attention span. • Decreased distractibility and motor restlessness. • Decreased impulsivity. • May be given daily or used only on school days. • Lasts 8 to 24 hours. • Concerta, Daytrana and Vyvanse are formulated to prevent drug abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May interfere with eating and sleep • 2 hour onset of action for Daytrana • Time of onset for Vyvanse is not published • Provigil has not been FDA approved for ADHD, but has shown effectiveness in controlled studies of children and adults
Daytrana (methylphenidate patch)			
Biphetamine, Dexedrine			
Vyvanse (lisdexamfetamine)			
Adderall or Adderall XR			
Strattera (atomoxetine)			
Provigil (modafinil)			

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Miscellaneous Group			
Catapres (clonidine) tablets skin patch	Calming hyperactivity associated with ADHD, Autism, Tourette Syndrome and other behavior disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May improve aggressive behavior in ADHD. • May also improve compulsive behaviors and tics. • Clonidine is used at night to help the child get to sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May lower blood pressure. • May cause daytime drowsiness. • Skin patch can be removed and swallowed by child • Requires monitoring of blood pressure and pulse.
Tenex (guanfacine)			

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Antidepressants			
Tofranil (imipramine) Norpramin (desipramine)	Treatment of anxiety, depression, and obsessive and compulsive behavior associated with anxiety disorders, depression, ADHD, OCD, Autism, and Tourette Syndrome. Tofranil, Norpramin, and Wellbutrin may be used as primary treatment for ADHD.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminish impulsive behaviors. • Decrease hyperactivity. • Improve depression. • Improvement in obsessive, compulsive and perseverative behavior. • Decrease in bed-wetting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May aggravate a seizure condition. • Cannot be used if there is a risk of psychosis. • Need to be taken daily. • May cause drowsiness, nausea and constipation. • May cause tremor • May increase depression. • Tofranil and Norpramin can cause heart rhythm problems
Anafranil (clomipramine)			
Prozac (fluoxetine)			
Wellbutrin (bupropion)			
Zoloft (sertraline)			
Paxil (paroxetine)			
Luvox (fluvoxamine)			
Celexa (citalopram)			
Effexor (venlafaxine)			MAY INCREASE SUICIDAL IDEATION

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Anticonvulsant Group			
Tegretol (carbamazepine)	Mood stabilization in Bipolar Disorder, Autistic Disorder, Tourette Syndrome, and various explosive disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be used in hyperactive patients with seizure disorders. • May be effective when aggression is associated with hyperactivity or organic brain syndrome. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires monitoring of blood levels, and bone marrow and liver functions. • Drowsiness, poor balance and behavior problems. • Keppra may cause psychotic symptoms
Depakene (valproate)			
Klonopin (clonazepam)			
Keppra (levetiracetam)			

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Major Tranquilizers			
Haldol (haloperidol)	Mood stabilization and treatment of explosive behavior in Autistic Disorder, Tourette Syndrome, Bipolar Disorder and other mood and explosive disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May have anti-aggressive effects. • May act as mood stabilizers • Risperdal stabilizes explosive behavior in children with Autism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleepiness. • Poor coordination • Involuntary movements or stiffness. • Risk for development of diabetes and high triglycerides • Weight gain • May decrease mental acuity. • Geodon, Abilify, Zyprexa and Seroquel are new, with little information on children and adolescents.
Orap (pimozide)			
Risperdal (risperidone)			
Zyprexa (olanzapine)	Treats tics in Tourette Syndrome		
Seroquel (quetiapine)	For control of psychotic symptoms in schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, and related disorders		
Geodon (ziprasidone)			
Abilify (aripiprazole)			
Invega (paliperidone)			

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Minor Tranquilizers			
Valium (diazepam)	Treatment of acute, severe anxiety attacks Valium and Ativan are also used for seizure disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decreased anxiety. • Decreased agitation. • Buspar may decrease aggression in children with organic brain disorders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedation. • Risk of psychological dependence.
Xanax (alprazolam)			
Buspar (buspirone)			
Ativan (lorazepam)			

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Antihistamines			
Benadryl (diphenhydramine)	Anxiety on an intermittent basis Nighttime sedation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May decrease anxiety. • May help child fall asleep. • Antihistamine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry mouth. • Restlessness.
Atarax (hydroxyzine)			

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Narcotic Antagonist			
Naltrexone	Self injurious behavior in Autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May decrease self-injury in children with autism. • May decrease hyperactivity in autism. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires regular liver function screening. • Lethargy. • Irritability. • Loss of appetite.

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Other			
Lithium Carbonate (in manic depressive disorder)	Control of mania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diminish manic-depressive symptoms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs monitoring for toxicity.

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Beta Blocker			
Inderal (propranolol)	Acute performance anxiety Explosive behavior Migraine prophylaxis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May reduce aggressive acts secondary to brain damage (rage reaction). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May slow heart rate & lower blood pressure. • Drowsiness. • Aggravates asthma.

MEDICATION	USED FOR	ANTICIPATED BENEFITS	DISADVANTAGES
Food Supplements			
Vitamin B6 with Magnesium	Management of behavior in Autism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved social awareness. • Decrease rage reaction. • Decrease stereotypic behavior. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritability. • Difficult to administer.
DMG		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved attention and behavior. • Decreased activity and impulsivity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paradoxical response of decreased attention and increased activity.
Folic Acid (in fragile X)			

This chart represents a sampling of medications and is by no means comprehensive. This chart was developed by Joanne Weigel, M.D., as a brief summary of the current literature on medications used for the purpose of managing children with behavior problems. The uses listed for these medications are based on medical research and current practice. Some of these have not been specifically approved by the FDA. For more extensive and up to date information on any medication or condition, consult the individual's medical provider.