Donepezil

Donepezil is an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor used to treat Alzheimer's disease. It is proposed that in Alzheimer's disease, patients have decreased synthesis of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. Although there is no definitive proof of halting disease progression with acetylcholinesterase inhibitor therapy, Donepezil is commonly used for Alzheimer's. Galantamine and rivastigmine can also used to Alzheimer's. Donepezil works by inhibiting the actions of acetylcholinesterase, which acts to break down the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. This leads to an increase in circulating acetylcholine. Side effects of this drug are related to excess cholinergic activity, and can include dizziness, nausea and vomiting, vivid dreams and GI upset.



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Indications

Alzheimer's Disease
Old-timer
This drug is used for cognitive benefits, palliation and disease progression monitoring in Alzheimer's disease. This disease is the most common form of dementia, which is progressive and ultimately leads to death. This disease is believed to be caused by decreased acetylcholine synthesis, tau protein tangles and amyloid deposits.

Mechanism of Action

Acetylcholinesterase Inhibitor
A-seagull-cola-nest with Inhibit-chains
This drug is an acetylcholinesterase inhibitor, which halts acetylcholine breakdown, increasing the relative amount of acetylcholine to patients.

Increased Acetylcholine
Up-arrow A-seagull-cola
Use of acetylcholinesterase inhibitors such as donepezil lead to increased relative amounts of acetylcholine.

Side Effects

Nausea and Vomiting
Vomiting
Patients taking Donepezil suffer from cholinergic side effects, including nausea and dizziness.

Dizziness
Dizzy-eyes
Excess cholinergic activity can cause dizziness in patients taking Donepezil.

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