Zolpidem (Ambien)

Zolpidem (Ambien) is a benzodiazepine-like hypnotic drug intended for short-term management of insomnia in patients who have difficulty sleeping or difficulty staying asleep. Side effects of this medication include daytime drowsiness, angioedema, and strange sleep behaviors such as sleep eating and sleepwalking. Due to its rapid onset, zolpidem should be taken immediately before bedtime.



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Mechanism

Hypnotic
Hypnotist
Zolpidem is a benzodiazepine-like drug that binds to the benzodiazepine-1 receptor site of the GABA receptor-chloride channel complex acting as an agonist. This medication works to lengthen sleep time and minimize awakenings. Unlike other benzodiazepines, zolpidem has no anti-anxiety, muscle-relaxing, or anti-convulsant properties.

Indications

Insomnia
Taped-awake-insomniac
Zolpidem is used in patients who have difficulty sleeping or difficulty staying asleep. This medication is not known to cause rebound insomnia when discontinued.

Side Effects

Daytime Drowsiness
Daytime Sleepy-guy
Patients may report feeling tired or drowsy during the day; patients should use caution while driving.

Bizarre Sleep Behaviors
Sleep-walking and Eating
Patients taking zolpidem may experience strange behaviors, such as sleep eating, sleepwalking, or sleep driving.

Sleep Driving
Sleeping while Driving
Sleep driving may occur when taking zolpidem. Patients should take extra precautions to avoid this behavior, as it can lead to unsafe driving, and an increased risk of motor vehicle accidents.

Angioedema
Angel-edamame
Angioedema and anaphylaxis can occur in patients when taking zolpidem. Patients should be educated about the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and what to do if/when they experience these symptoms.

Considerations

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Short Term Administration

Nurse-in-Shorts Administering

Zolpidem is approved for short-term treatment of insomnia and should not be used as a long-term solution.

Take Immediately Before Bedtime

Taking Pill Immediately Before Bed

Zolpidem begins working quickly, and should be taken immediately before the patient’s bedtime to prevent injury.

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