

DEPRESCRIBING ALPHA-AGONISTS IN YOUTH

WHAT IS DEPRESCRIBING?

A structured approach to evaluating medications for indications, risks, and benefits with a goal of a minimum effective dose and number of medications.

STEP 1: PATIENT CONSIDERATIONS

Consider each of the following:

- The strength of the diagnosis of ADHD
- The severity and duration of the illness and length of treatment
- Current demands for attention and behavior – summer may be a good time to reduce or stop
- Family and youth request

STEP 2: REVIEW MEDICATION HISTORY

Review:

- [Medication History Tool](#)
- [Psychotropic Medication List](#) (see page 9 for alpha-agonists)

STEP 3: ASSESS EACH MEDICATION

Consider:

- Current benefit of the medication
- Possible side effects of alpha-agonists – sedation, irritability, hypotension, bradycardia

STEP 4: DEPRESCRIBING

Steps to follow:

- Both long-acting and regular-release alpha-agonists should be stopped gradually to avoid rebound hypertension
- For rapid discontinuation, you can lower the dose by 25% every 3 days
- Educate the youth and family on managing mild behavioral problems through parent management
- For assistance, Norton providers can consult psych via Epic Secure Chat to NCMG Child Psychiatry and Psychology



KENTUCKY SAFEMED

FOLLOW-UP

- Have the youth/family call or visit in 1 month to report progress
- Use standardized rating tools to monitor symptoms of ADHD, such as the [Vanderbilt Parent Rating Scale](#)
- Encourage the youth/family to continue therapy

REFERENCES and SUPPORT

1. [2018 - 2019 Florida Best Practice Psychotherapeutic Medication Guidelines](#)
2. [MCAP Guidelines and Clinical Pearls](#) (Anxiety, Depression, and ADHD)
3. [Ohio Minds Matter](#)

For questions or more information, email: safemed@louisville.edu

Visit our website:
<https://uofl.edu/KYsafemed>