

# PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

## Reducing Proton Pump Inhibitor Use

Vinita Patel, MD; Gilda Djabarzade, MD; Emily Eckerstrom, MD

Ronald Januchowski, DO, FACOFP, Editor • Paula Gregory, DO, MBA, CHCQM, FAIHQ, Health Literacy Editor

### WHAT ARE PROTON PUMP INHIBITORS (PPIS)?

Medications used for treating stomach problems like heartburn, ulcers and indigestion include Nexium®, Prevacid®, Prilosec® and Dexilant®.

### WHY SHOULD YOU CONSIDER STOPPING?

- Risk of osteoporosis and fractures
- Risk of intestinal infections by Clostridium difficile
- Risk of kidney disease
- Risk of lung infections
- Risk of low iron and vitamin B12 level
- Risk of cardiac events when taking both PPI and Plavix (clopidogrel)

### WHEN SHOULD YOU CONSIDER STOPPING?

- Have you been on your PPI for more than four weeks?
  - Discuss with your doctor about the risks/benefits of continuing PPI use and ways to reduce your risk of PPI complications.
- Reasons you may need to continue to be on PPI include:
  - High risk of stomach ulcers
  - On NSAIDs or other medications that increase the risk of ulcers
  - Barrett's esophagus
  - Severe esophagitis
  - Reoccurring symptoms of indigestion/heartburn

### HOW WILL YOU STOP?

#### STEP 1: Preparing to stop

- Avoid fried/fatty foods, chocolate, coffee, citrus, soda, spicy foods
- Stop smoking
- Avoid alcohol
- Weight loss
- Eat small meals and wait 2-3 hours before lying down
- Elevate the head of the bed

#### STEP 2: Lowering dose or stopping your PPI

- Discuss tapering off with your doctor
- For occasional symptoms, your doctor may recommend taking an antacid (Tums®, Maalox®) or an acid blocker like famotidine (Pepcid®). Avoid Zantac® as it is currently recalled.
- Ask about on-demand therapy where PPI is temporarily restarted to alleviate symptoms and stopped after symptoms are resolved.

#### STEP 3: Follow-up

- Discuss with your doctor about your symptom management and implementing lifestyle changes for better symptom control.

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