

MEDICAL PHARMACIES DRUG NEWS

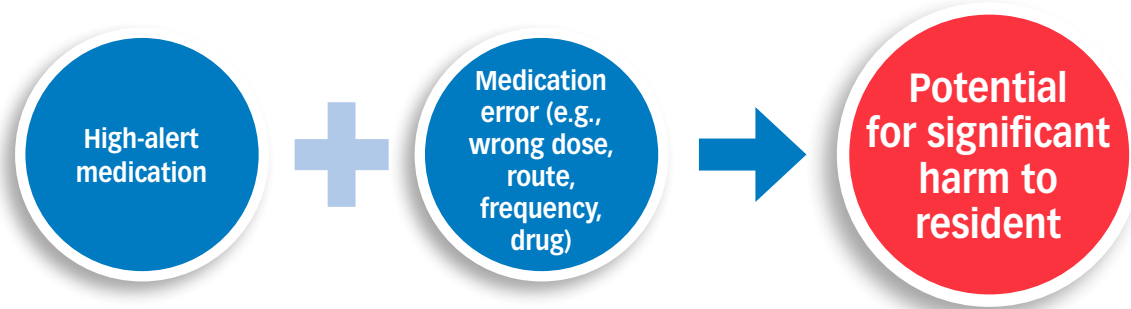
Drug Information and News for Health Care Providers

July 2017

REVIEW OF HIGH-ALERT MEDICATIONS IN SENIOR CARE

What does high-alert medications mean?

These are medications that **when used in error** may cause significant harm to residents.



Which medications are considered "high-alert"?

Examples of commonly used high-alert medications include:

Category of Medication	Examples
Anticoagulants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warfarin (Coumadin®) • Heparin (unfractionated) and low-molecular weight heparins (LMWHs) (e.g., dalteparin/Fragmin®, enoxaparin/Lovenox®) • Dabigatran (Pradaxa®) • Rivaroxaban (Xarelto®) • Apixaban (Eliquis®)
Opioids (all formulations)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ HYDROmorphine (Dilaudid®, Hydromorph Contin®) ○ morphine/Statex®/MS.IR® • Fentanyl patches (Duragesic®), ampoules • HYDROmorphine injectable (Dilaudid®) (greater than 2 mg/mL per ampoule) • Morphine injectable (greater than 15 mg/mL per ampoule) • Methadone (Methadose™)
Methotrexate	Parenteral and oral
Insulin (all types)	Some examples (not exhaustive) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lantus® • Levemir® • NovoRapid® • Humalog® • Apidra® • NovoMix® • Novolin®
Oral hypoglycemics	Some examples (not exhaustive) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sulfonylureas (glyburide/Diabetas®, gliclazide/Diamicon®, glimepiride/Amaryl®) • Meglitinides (repaglinide/GlucoNorm®, nateglinide/Starlix®)
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digoxin (Lanoxin®) • Epinephrine • Iron Dextran (parenteral) (e.g., DexIron®/Infufer®) • Chemotherapeutic agents, parenteral and oral (excluding hormonal agents)

Reference:

Institute for Safe Medication Practices. ISMP List of High-Alert Medications in Long-Term Care (LTC) Settings. 2016.