

but there's no specific recommendation on how much to increase the dose. Coadministration with other inducers of CYP3A, such as the antitubercular drug rifampin and the over-the-counter herb St. John's wort, should be avoided. When given at the 12-mg dose, perampanel can lower circulating levels of oral contraceptives containing levonorgestrel enough to make them lose their therapeutic effectiveness.

The drug is taken once daily at bedtime. The recommended dosage (after titration) is 8 to 12 mg. A daily dosage of 12 mg greatly increases the risk of adverse effects. In clinical trials, serious adverse psychiatric and behavioral effects occurred in 20% of those receiving 12 mg, compared with 12% who received 8 mg, and 6% who received placebo. The recommended dosage may vary depending on which other antiepileptic medication is being taken concurrently and the patient's clinical responsiveness to the drug. Dosage increases should be made at weekly intervals; in older adults and patients with mild-to-moderate hepatic impairment, dosage increases should be made at two-week intervals. Patients with severe hepatic or renal impairment or who are on hemodialysis shouldn't be given perampanel.

Nurses should instruct patients to read the medication guide that accompanies each filled prescription for the most current information on potential serious adverse effects. Patients should be informed that perampanel can decrease the efficacy of oral contraceptives containing levonorgestrel and that they should use another form of birth control along with the oral contraceptive. Patients should be cautioned about the risk of sedation and instructed to avoid driving and operating complex machinery until they know how perampanel will affect them. Older adults, in particular, should take

steps to prevent falls. Patients who miss a dose of perampanel should only take the next prescribed dose and not double up on the dose. Instruct patients not to suddenly stop taking perampanel, which could induce more seizures.

To read the FDA news release regarding perampanel's approval, go to <http://1.usa.gov/Vw0hev>.

### PROTECTING CONSUMERS FROM FAKE ONLINE PHARMACIES

- The Food and Drug Administration has launched a national campaign aimed at protecting the public from fraudulent Internet pharmacies. Fraudulent companies may appear real but sell counterfeit or adulterated drugs, resulting in a failure to produce therapeutic effect or in adverse effects.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has launched a national campaign to help protect the public from fraudulent Internet pharmacies. According to the FDA, approximately one in four Internet consumers has purchased a prescription medicine online. Although there are reputable online sources, which are usually connected to actual retail pharmacies, there are also fake online pharmacies. These appear real to consumers but may sell counterfeit or adulterated drugs. This could mean that the patients don't achieve the therapeutic effect expected from the drug or that they experience adverse effects or become ill from the drug. Fake online pharmacies may also be scams to obtain personal and financial information about the consumers using the site. Signs that an online pharmacy isn't legitimate include selling prescription drugs without a prescription from a physician or NP, offering deep discounts or cheap prices (if it seems too good to be true, it most likely is), sending spam or other unsolicited e-mails offering cheap

drugs, being located outside of the United States, and not being licensed in the United States.

According to the FDA, the following individuals might be likely to buy medication from an online pharmacy: those without adequate prescription coverage, those with lower incomes, those who need long-term maintenance medicine, those who seek "lifestyle medicines" (drugs that aren't considered medically necessary and are therefore not covered by insurance plans, such as antiobesity or erectile dysfunction agents), those who are looking for financial assistance with prescriptions for themselves or loved ones, and those who are accustomed to home delivery of medication but have met their insurance coverage limits for pharmaceuticals.

Nurses and other health care providers should have discussions with patients about where they intend to purchase their medications. Patients who want to use online pharmacies should be taught how to confirm the legitimacy of any online pharmacy prior to purchasing medications. The FDA has a dedicated Web page (<http://1.usa.gov/NVbCAC>) where consumers can find their state board of pharmacy's license database. In addition to confirming that a pharmacy has a state license, patients should confirm that it requires a valid prescription, provides a physical address and telephone number in the United States, and has a licensed pharmacist to answer questions.

Patient education materials related to the safe use of online pharmacies are available on the FDA Web site and can be downloaded and printed for free by clicking on the health care provider link: <http://1.usa.gov/SjrjOF>. ▼

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