

The Importance of Metabolic Monitoring

Antipsychotic medications can elevate the risk for developing metabolic syndrome, described as a cluster of signs and symptoms, including insulin resistance, dyslipidemia, and hypertension, that increases subsequent risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Metabolic syndrome can also increase the risk of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease and premature death. Providers including psychiatric pharmacists can improve patient care through metabolic syndrome monitoring and recommendation of appropriate interventions. Patients taking antipsychotic medications should receive routine monitoring for weight, fasting plasma glucose/A1c, lipids, and blood pressure.¹

Provider Tips

- Complete a full comprehensive exam before diagnosing and prescribing.
- Discuss weight management options, physical activity, sleep, and a well-balanced diet.
- Educate patients and their caregivers on the importance of completing annual visits and blood work.
- To increase compliance, consider using standing orders to get HbA1c and LDL-C lab tests.
- Verify the lab is contracted with the health plan to ensure the patient will not incur unnecessary charges.
- Maintain appointment availability and schedule follow-up visits before the patient leaves the office.
- Discuss the importance of disease management, medication adherence and lab work.
- Coordinate care with all medical and behavioral health providers.
- Partner with the health plan, address barriers and refer patients and caregivers to community-based and case management services.

Measures

- Metabolic Monitoring for Children and Adolescents on Antipsychotics (APM)
- Diabetes Screening for People with Schizophrenia or bipolar disorder who are Using Antipsychotic Medications (SSD)
- Cardiovascular Monitoring for People with Cardiovascular Disease and Schizophrenia (SMC)
- Diabetes Monitoring for People with Diabetes and Schizophrenia (SMD)

Additional Support:

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI): www.nami.org
- American Heart Association: www.heart.org
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): www.samhsa.gov

Source:

1. National Library of Medicine: [Ment Health Clin.](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/311319/) 2021 Nov; 11(6): 311–319.