



Clinician Summary Newer Drugs for Insomnia

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Based on DERP report of October 2008

Produced by:
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Drugs included:

1. Eszopiclone
2. Ramelteon
3. Zaleplon
4. Zolpidem and Zolpidem extended release
5. Zopiclone

Limitations of the evidence:

Insomnia is not a disease. It is symptom with many causes.

1. There are no data showing that these drugs improve the consequences of insomnia such as depression, poor memory, reduced concentration or poor general health.
2. Studies show statistically significant differences in some efficacy measurements of sleep initiation and duration, but the small magnitude of the effect may be clinically irrelevant.
3. There is no information about long term safety.
4. There is no evidence in children.

Conclusions

Moderate evidence: Efficacy compared to placebo is comparable and small for all included medications.

Harms

Moderate evidence: There is increased risk of somnolence, impairment of memory and motor function, abuse, dependence, and hip fractures in the elderly.

Table 1. Newer drugs for insomnia

Active ingredient	Brand name	Initial dose (given at bedtime)	Half-life (hours)	
Adults			Older adults	
Eszopiclone	Lunesta	2-3 mg	1-2 mg	6 (9 in older adults)
Ramelteon	Rozerem	8 mg	8 mg	1-2.6
Zaleplon	Sonata, generic	10 mg	5 mg	1
Zolpidem	Ambien, generic	10 mg	5 mg	2.5
Zolpidem extended-release	Ambien-CR	12.5 mg	6.25 mg	2.8
Zopiclone (Canada)	Imovane	5 to 7.5 mg	3.75 mg	5