

Antipsychotics and Hyperprolactinemia

What is prolactin and hyperprolactinemia?

Prolactin is a hormone produced naturally in the human body that regulates lactation and the development of breast tissue. Outside of these core functions, prolactin also works to regulate many of the body's functions, including metabolism. Hyperprolactinemia is the excess of prolactin in the body.

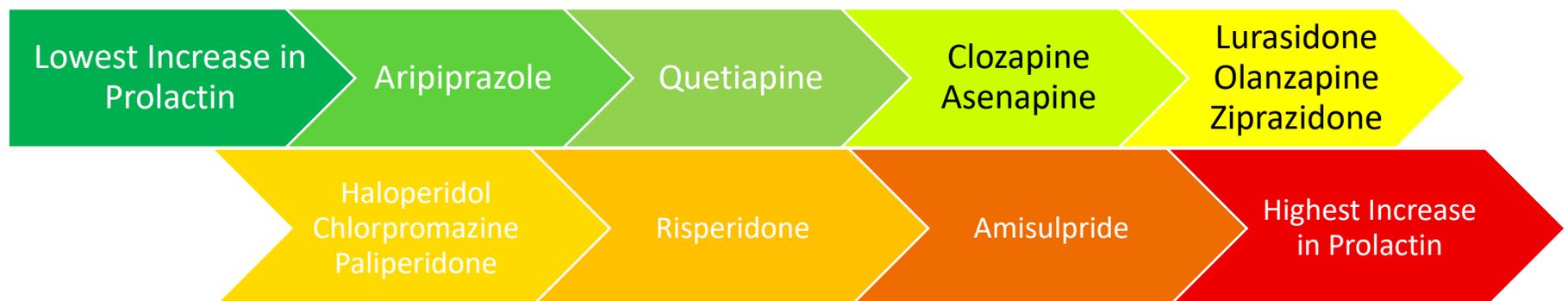
Why could my medication cause hyperprolactinemia?

Your medication works by suppressing another hormone called dopamine. While effective at suppressing your symptoms, the medication can also affect the other roles of dopamine – in this case, dopamine works as a natural suppressor of prolactin, and blocking dopamine will in turn increase the prolactin in your body.

What does hyperprolactinemia look like?

Hyperprolactinemia can present in various ways: a **milky discharge from the nipples**, **low bone density**, and a **decreased libido**. In women, hyperprolactinemia can also present with **irregular periods**, while in men, it can result in **erectile dysfunction**. Please consult your psychiatrist immediately if you notice any of these symptoms.

Not all antipsychotics affect prolactin levels the same:



De Hert, M., Vancampfort, D., Stubbs, B., Sabbe, T., Wildiers, H., & Detraux, J. (2016). Antipsychotic treatment, prolactin, and breast tumorigenesis. *Psychiatria Danubina*, 28 3, 243-254 .