**Chapter 41  Drugs for Bowel Disorders and Other Gastrointestinal Conditions**

**Assessment**

Prior to administration:
- Obtain a complete health history including allergies, drug history, and possible drug interactions.
- Assess sodium, chloride, and potassium levels.
- Evaluate results of stool culture.
- Assess for presence of dehydration.
- Obtain vital signs and ECG.

**Potential Nursing Diagnoses**

- Fluid Volume, Imbalanced, Risk for: Less than Body Requirements, related to fluid loss secondary to diarrhea
- Injury (falls), Risk for, related to drowsiness secondary to drug therapy

**Planning: Client Goals and Expected Outcomes**

The client will:
- Report relief of diarrhea.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the drug’s action by accurately describing drug side effects and precautions.
- Immediately report effects such as persistent diarrhea, constipation, abdominal pain, blood in stool, confusion, dizziness, or fever.

**Implementation**

**Interventions and (Rationales)**

- Monitor frequency, volume, and consistency of stools. (This determines the effectiveness of drug therapy.)
- Minimize the risk of dehydration and electrolyte imbalance. (These adverse effects may occur secondary to diarrhea.)
- Prevent accidental overdosage. (Overdosage can cause constipation.)
- Monitor for dry mouth. (This is a side effect of medications.)
- Initiate safety measures to prevent falls. (These medications may cause drowsiness.)
- Monitor electrolyte levels. (With diarrhea, electrolyte imbalance may occur.)

**Client Education/Discharge Planning**

- Advise client to:
  - Record the frequency of stools.
  - Note if any blood is present in stools.
  - Report any abdominal pain or abdominal distention immediately.
- Instruct client to:
  - Increase fluid intake and drink electrolyte-enriched fluids.
  - Use the dropper included in liquid medications, not household teaspoons, to measure liquid medication dosage.
  - Suck on ice or sour candy, or chew gum, to relieve sensation of dry mouth.
  - Refrain from driving or performing hazardous activities until the effects of drug are known.
  - Keep all laboratory appointments.
  - Abstain from using alcohol or other CNS depressants.

**Evaluation of Outcome Criteria**

Evaluate the effectiveness of drug therapy by confirming that the client goals and expected outcomes have been met (see “Planning”).
- The client reports relief of diarrhea.
- The client demonstrates an understanding of the drug’s action by accurately describing drug side effects and precautions.
- The client accurately states signs and symptoms to be reported to the healthcare provider.

See Table 41.2 for a list of drugs to which these nursing actions apply.

**NURSING CONSIDERATIONS**

The role of the nurse in tegaserod (Zelnorm) therapy for IBD involves careful monitoring of a client’s condition and providing education as it relates to the prescribed drug treatment. Prior to and during therapy, monitor liver and renal function. Monitor cardiovascular status, especially in clients with preexisting cardiovascular disease.

Tegaserod is contraindicated in severe hepatic or renal impairment, bowel obstruction, gallbladder disease, and abdominal pain.

Administer the drug just prior to a meal with a full glass of water. Tablets may be crushed. Do not give the drug to clients with frequent diarrhea because tegaserod accelerates gastric emptying. Monitor symptom relief and report frequent diarrhea or lack of relief. Side effects of tegaserod...