



Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network

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Ziprasidone (Geodon)

The medication Ziprasidone (**Geodon**) is an **atypical neuroleptic**. It is used to treat psychosis. Psychosis can be experienced as disorganized thinking or behavior and unusual perceptions (hearing voices, seeing things, feeling paranoid). *Geodon* is also used to treat mood instability associated with manic-depressive disorder. Symptoms including poor sleep, racing thoughts and severe mood swings can be reduced with *Geodon*. Generally these symptoms interfere with your life goals. There may be other reasons someone takes *Geodon*.

Geodon is FDA approved for Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, and agitation associated with Schizophrenia.

Although *Geodon* can be very helpful, it can cause some side effects that you should know of before accepting treatment with it. The most common include: **drowsiness and muscle stiffness**. Although these effects generally occur during initial treatment, some remain throughout treatment and may warrant discontinuing the medication. Talk with your provider about it.

Recently, **neuroleptics** have been found to be associated with diabetes and weight gain, high cholesterol, and high triglycerides. Though serious, these side effects are uncommon. Nevertheless, it is important to talk to your provider about these issues. Specifically, *Geodon* is very unlikely to cause problems in this area. Yet these issues have been observed with medications within the same class as *Geodon*. Like other medications in its class, *Geodon* can affect the rhythm of the heart. If you have a history of heart problems, talk to your doctor.

Geodon is different from older **typical** neuroleptics in that it is **less** likely to cause EPS (ExtraPyramidal Side effects). But in the rare instances that these may occur they include resting tremor, muscle stiffness or spasms, abnormal movements of the mouth, tongue, extremities. These are usually benign and can be treated with side effect medication. Tardive Dyskinesia (unusual movements of the mouth, tongue, arms) and NMS (high fever, racing heart,

agitation, sweating) although rare, are serious side effects of the older **typical** neuroleptics. These effects are considerably lower with *Geodon*.

The beneficial effect of *Geodon* can sometimes take 3-5 days to three weeks, sometimes longer. The maximum effect can sometimes take as long as 9-12 months. Generally if no effect is felt after 6 weeks, then a different medication or different dosage should be considered. The usual dosage range is 100-160 mg/ day.

Geodon is generally safe with other medications. But as with all medications, please let your provider know if you are engaged in other treatments. There are no dietary restrictions with *Geodon*, BUT, you must take *Geodon* with a small meal for it to be absorbed in your body.

There are supplemental ways to improve life which include:

- exercise**
- good sleep habits**
- good eating habits**
- yoga**
- a hobby**
- visiting with family or friends**
- psychotherapy**

Although important, these methods alone cannot restore clear thinking.

If you have further questions about this medication, please ask your medical provider or your pharmacist.

Original:	08/2011	Last reviewed:	06/2012				
		Last revised:	08/2011				