

Children and adolescents on antipsychotic medications

Antipsychotic medications may serve as an effective treatment for a **narrowly defined set of psychiatric disorders**. However, studies show that providers are increasingly prescribing these medications to pediatric patients with conditions, such as ADHD, depression, anxiety disorders, behavioral disorders, and even insomnia, where **psychosocial interventions** are recommended as first-line treatment.¹

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) advises providers to take great care and consideration before prescribing antipsychotic medications, given their adverse effects², which include:

- **Metabolic Syndrome**
- **Increased Prolactin Concentrations**
- **Extrapyramidal Symptoms**
- **Cardiovascular Changes**

The AAP guidelines on metabolic monitoring for pediatric patients receiving antipsychotic medications include baseline and ongoing measurement² of:

- **BMI**
- **Waist Circumference**
- **Fasting Blood Glucose**
- **Hemoglobin A1c**
- **Fasting Lipid Concentrations**

HEDIS[®] specifications state these tests³ should be done **yearly** for children and adolescents on antipsychotics:

- **Blood Glucose or Hemoglobin A1c**
- **LDL-C or Cholesterol**

Helpful tools and resources

- A HEDIS[®] Overview is posted on providerexpress.com (Schizophrenia/Antipsychotic Medications).
- liveandworkwell.com You may find relevant articles and resources for your patients (use access code “clinician”)
- [Telemental Health Overview](#) Telemental health information for providers

1. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality. Use of First-Line Psychosocial Care for Children and Adolescents on Antipsychotics (APP). Available at: <http://www.ahrq.gov>.
2. Hua, L. L., & COMMITTEE ON ADOLESCENCE (2021). Collaborative Care in the Identification and Management of Psychosis in Adolescents and Young Adults. *Pediatrics*, 147(6), e2021051486. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2021-051486>
3. National Committee for Quality Assurance 2021 HEDIS[®] Specifications, see NQF-Endorsed Measures at www.ncqa.org

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