1-101 Lewy Body and Benzodiazepines

TIPS Question:

Do you have any information regarding Benzodiazepines if should be used for resident suffering from Lewy Body Dementia (sensitive to medication)?

Response:

You are absolutely correct. Lewy Body dementia is a type of dementia that is extremely sensitive to medications but the class which has been identified specifically is antipsychotics. They should therefore be avoided in individuals with Lewy Body disease, particularly as there is a high propensity to cause quite significant and severe Parkinson's symptoms.

I am not aware of any difference in sensitivity to Benzodiazepines between Lewy Body and other dementia. But, they can be problematic in all types of dementia, causing at times sedation, confusion, and ataxia and falls. Recently, the cholinergic enhancers have been found to be useful in some situations and in some individuals with Lewy Body dementia.

Please note: *TIPS information should be used similar to the way you would use information from a text book! TIPS is not intended to serve as an individual consultation service!.P.I.E.C.E.S. participants should use this information in context and always work closely with the family physician involved in the care of the resident or client and with other Partners In Care to find solutions to individual resident/client issues.*