1-144 Schizophrenia and cognition

TIPS Question:

We presently have a resident whose diagnosis is schizophrenia. She has lived in the home for approx 15 years and has been in and out of the Psychiatric Hospital when her manic states were elevated. As she is getting older, her manic states have diminished, and she is getting weaker. A Mini-mental was done, and she scored 22/30. My question is "Can Aricept be used safely with someone who has schizophrenia?" We have seen in the past with this resident that a change in medication has altered her behaviour greatly and elevated her behaviour to the manic state. She is presently taking Modcate 25 mg. IM q2wks to help control her moods.

Response:

It will be important to determine the cause of the resident's Mini Mental score. Is it due to her inability to focus, secondary to her schizophrenia? Also, there are cognitive changes associated with schizophrenia itself. If this is the case, a cholinergic may not be indicated. If it is a concurrent dementia of Alzheimer's type, then there may be an indication.

In determining whether to use Aricept, not only should the above be clarified but a screen of potential vulnerability identified in the psychotropic template re MIND.

There are no contraindications to using it in a schizophrenic patient. However, one should monitor closely for side effects, drug interactions, and any increase in psychotic symptoms.

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.*