3-73 Myasthenia Gravis treatment with cholinesterase

TIPS Question:

A resident has a diagnosis of Myasthenia Gravis and is presently receiving Mestinon 60 mg QID with meals & at bedtime. Would there be a problem with administering Exelon cholinesterase inhibitor with this drug? This resident now presents with early dementia and we want to be cautious with the combination of medication.

What are the significant factors you have learned as a result of working through the six-question template?

- We found this client has early dementia with mild impairment. We feel that a cognitive enhancer may be helpful.

Response:

An excellent question. Mestinon reversibly binds to cholinesterase and inactivates it. It has an atropine like action but tends to exert its effects peripherally. It does not cross the blood brain barrier except in very high doses.

Exelon on the other hand has central cholinesterase (acetylcholinestrase and butyrlcholinestrase) inhibition. I suggest the two drugs may be used together if one would monitor for side effects and do not use very high doses of Mestinon.

Finally I would suggest you discuss this with the pharmacist.

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.*