Primary care recommendations for monitoring of ADHD medications during the COVID-19 pandemic

For medications used to treat ADHD, the usual monitoring recommendations are found on the NICE website.

Stable patients (i.e. those who have had at least six months treatment) would usually measure:

- Children aged 10 years or under
  - Height every six months
  - Weight every three months
- Children aged over 10
  - Height and weight every six months
- Adults
  - Weight every six months
- All patient groups
  - Heart rate and blood pressure before and after each dose change and every six months.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the following is a set of recommendations to reduce attendances in Primary care.1,2

- Routine appointments can be conducted via virtual consultation. If the appropriate equipment for home measurements are available, clinicians should encourage patients or parents/carers to measure height, weight, heart rate and blood pressure (taken with an age adjusted cuff) at home to reduce clinic attendance.
- The GP should record these measurements in the patient’s notes stating measurements are self-reported. Due to the risk that measurements provided may not be accurate, clinicians should assess whether measurements provided make sense.
- A face to face physical examination may be deemed necessary depending on the individual risk appraisal.
- Routine blood tests and/or routine ECGs are not required unless there is a clinical indication.

For patients with COVID-19 symptoms, recommendations are:

- If home monitoring equipment is available, monitor heart rate and blood pressure routinely throughout the period of infection.
- If symptoms are mild, continue ADHD medications as normal.
- If symptoms increase in severity (e.g. breathlessness), contact the initiating Specialist/initiating team for advice on possible adjustments to medication.
- The decision to continue medication is made on a benefit/risk assessment.

References


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