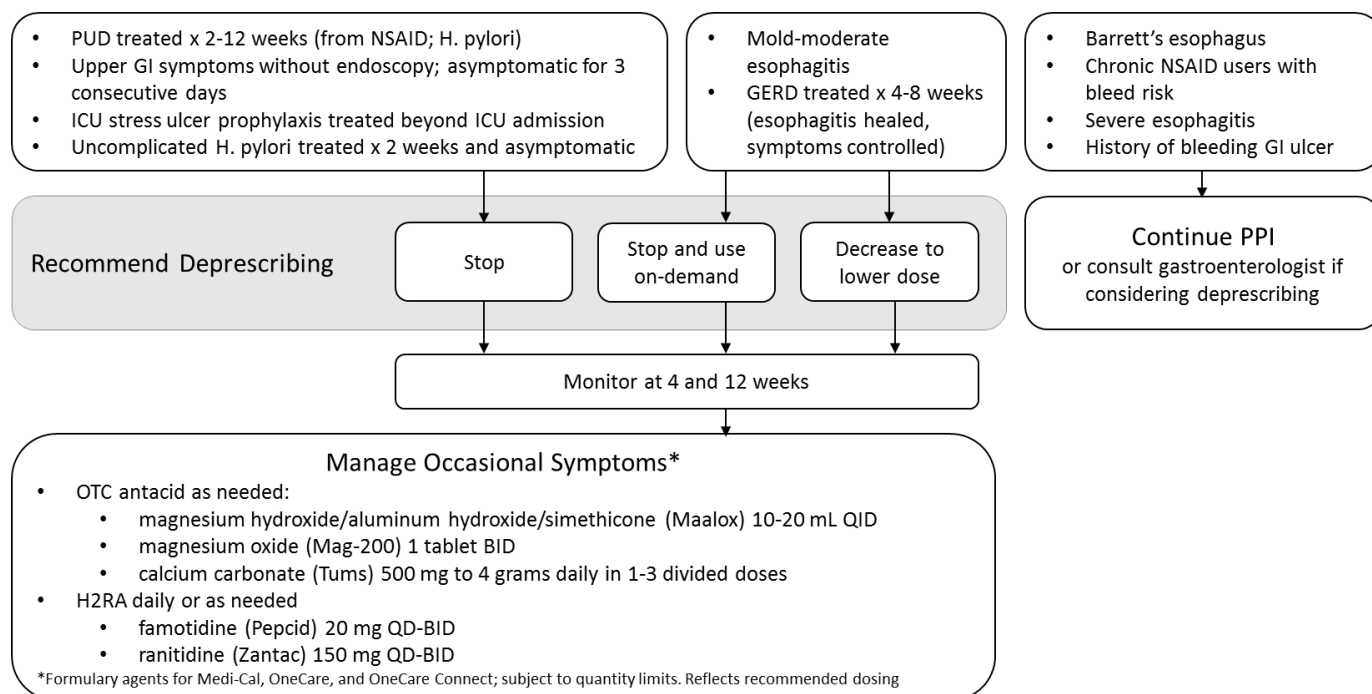


Deprescribing Proton Pump Inhibitors in the Elderly

Proton pump inhibitors (PPIs) are commonly prescribed for acid-related gastrointestinal conditions, however recent clinical recommendations cite these products as having increased risks of adverse effects among the elderly population.^{1,2} In the 2019 American Geriatrics Society (AGS) Beers Criteria update, PPIs remain on the list of Potentially Inappropriate Medication Use in Older Adults. The AGS strongly recommends avoiding the use of PPIs for more than 8 weeks in patients age 65 and older, unless for high-risk (e.g. chronic NSAID use), erosive esophagitis, Barrett's esophagitis, pathological hypersecretory condition, or demonstrated need for maintenance treatment due to failure of drug discontinuation or histamine-2 receptor antagonists (H2RAs).³

According to the Beers Criteria, PPI treatment duration should be limited since their use has been associated with *Clostridium difficile* infections, bone loss, and fractures.³ When required, PPIs should be used at the lowest effective dose for the shortest period of time to minimize these risks.^{1,2} No single tapering approach has been shown to be better than the other. Options for deprescribing include an abrupt PPI discontinuation, PPI tapering regimen with or without the use of H2RAs, and PPI dose reduction for maintenance, as shown in Figure 1 below.¹

Figure 1. PPI Deprescribing Algorithm¹



With the 2019 Beers Criteria update, the AGS now recommends H2RAs as therapeutic alternatives in patients with dementia and cognitive impairment, but to be avoided in patients with delirium.^{3,4} In addition to pharmacologic therapy, it is important to encourage lifestyle modifications, such as head of bed elevation, avoidance of late evening meals and dietary triggers (e.g. chocolate, caffeine, alcohol, spicy foods), smoking cessation, stress reduction, and weight loss, if appropriate.²

References

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Medi-Cal Educational Bulletins are available through the CalOptima website at www.caloptima.org: Providers-Medi-Cal Pharmacy Resources

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