

APPENDIX B

DRUG INTERACTIONS WITH METHADONE

<i>Drug</i>	<i>Degree of interaction</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>
Alcohol		Increased sedation	Additive CNS depression
Barbiturates	Moderate	Reduced methadone levels, raised sedation	Raised hepatic metabolism, additive CNS depression
Benzodiazepines		Enhanced sedative effect	Additive CNS depression
Buprenorphine		Antagonist effect	Can only be used safely in low dose (20mg or less daily) methadone treatment
Carbamazepine	Moderate	Reduced methadone levels	Raised hepatic metabolism; methadone may need BD dosing regime
Chloral hydrate		Increased sedation	Additive CNS depression
Chlormethiazole		Increased sedation	Additive CNS depression
Cimetidine	Moderate	Possible increase in methadone levels	Inhibits hepatic enzymes involved in methadone metabolism
Cisapride Domperidone Metoclopramide		Morphine has an increased rate of onset of action and increased sedative effect when used with these drugs	Unknown
Cyclizine	Severe	Injection with opiates causing hallucinations reported	Unknown
Codeine		Enhanced sedative effect	Additive CNS depression
Desipramine	Moderate	Raised desipramine levels (x2)	Unknown—interaction not seen with other tricyclic antidepressants
Dextropropoxyphene		Enhanced sedative effect	Additive CNS depression
MAOI antidepressants including moclobemide and selegiline	Severe with pethidine although rare with methadone Concurrent use should be avoided	CNS excitation—delirium, hyperpyrexia, convulsions or respiratory depression	Unknown
Naltrexone	Severe	Reverses the effects of methadone in overdose (long acting)	Opiate antagonist, works by competing for opiate receptors
Naloxone	Severe	Reverses the effects of methadone in overdose (short acting)	Opiate antagonist, works by competing for opiate receptors

(Continued overleaf)

◆ NATIONAL POLICY ON METHADONE TREATMENT

DRUG INTERACTIONS WITH METHADONE (*continued*)

<i>Drug</i>	<i>Degree of interaction</i>	<i>Effect</i>	<i>Mechanism</i>
Phenobarbitone	Moderate	Reduces methadone levels	Raised hepatic (liver) metabolism—see carbamazepine
Phenytoin	Moderate	Reduced methadone levels: withdrawal symptoms	Raised hepatic (liver) metabolism—see carbamazepine
Rifampicin	Severe	Reduced methadone levels: withdrawal symptoms	Raised hepatic (liver) metabolism
Tricyclic antidepressants eg, amitriptyline	Moderate	Increased sedation	Unknown
Urine acidifiers eg, ammonium chloride		Reduced methadone levels	Raised urinary excretion
Urine alkalinisers eg, sodium bicarbonate	Moderate	Raised methadone levels	Reduced urinary excretion
Zidovudine		Raised levels of zidovudine possible	Unknown
Zopiclone		Increased sedation	Additive CNS depression

Adapted from: Preston A. *The Methadone Briefing*. Island Press, UK, 1996. Reprinted with permission.