

The Ohio State University College of Pharmacy
DRUG INFORMATION RESPONSE FORM

Requested by:	Name: Jon McClymont	Title: Director of Pharmacy		
Contact Info:	Phone: N/A	Fax: N/A	Email: N/A	Address: River Vista Behavioral Hospital
Received by: Kaeli Parcel		Date received: 6/1/2021	Date Returned: 6/21/2021	

Question: What is the most appropriate treatment for a young adult male with Morgellons disease who takes Pimozide at home?

How requested: Verbal	Type of Request: Drug Therapy
-----------------------	-------------------------------

Patient information:

Diagnosis: Morgellons Disease
Pertinent Lab Values: N/A
Pertinent Medical History: N/A

Age: Mid to late 20s
Gender: Male
Miscellaneous Information: Patient takes and reports he is well controlled on Pimozide 2 mg by mouth daily

Resources Used:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Micromedex | <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lexi-Comp | <input type="checkbox"/> National Guidelines |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug Facts & Comparisons | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pubmed (search terms): Morgellons Disease |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AHFS Drug Information | <input type="checkbox"/> International Pharmaceutical Abstracts (search terms): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dipro's Pharmacotherapy | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clinical Key | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brigg's Drugs in Pregnancy & Lactation | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trissel's Handbook on Injectable Drugs | |

Time Spent to Answer Question: 90 minutes

Response provided by: Kaeli Parcel, PharmD Candidate 2022

Morgellons Disease is a complicated disease state with a controversial pathology divided between the dermatologic and psychiatric fields.¹ Individuals suffering from Morgellons Disease present with a crawling sensation with painful sores on the skin; the patients typically have fibers or filaments buried in or emerging from the sores.² Several studies have been conducted investigating the source of the fibers and, currently, there has been no infectious etiology

established, indicating the fibers likely have come from the environment.¹ Due to the lack of research associated with Morgellons Disease, there are varying opinions on appropriate treatment. However, because of the lack of evidence of infection across histopathology, cultures and other identification methods, the consensus is that antipsychotic therapy is the preferred treatment over antimicrobial therapy.^{1,2} Various antipsychotics have been trialed and shown to be effective in the treatment of Morgellons; one of the more common therapy choices is pimozide 2 to 4 mg daily.^{3,4} Low dose trifluoperazine at doses up to 4 mg daily has also shown benefits in some patient cases.⁵ Lastly, there is evidence that shows second generation antipsychotics, olanzapine and risperidone are beneficial in the treatment of Morgellons.¹ Ultimately, the decision on therapy for the condition should be based on the side effect profile of the medication compared to the patient history and the availability of the medication to the patient.⁵

For this patient, trifluoperazine and pimozide are not formulary medications at RiverVista, therefore rendering them inappropriate choices. Risperidone and olanzapine are both formulary medications at RiverVista, so the decision here must be made based on allergy information and the patient's willingness to try that medication. If risperidone is chosen, the recommended dose would be 0.5 mg once daily.⁶ The dose can be increased weekly based on the patient's response.⁶ On the other hand, if olanzapine is chosen the recommended starting dose is 2.5 mg once daily.⁷ Based on the patient's response, the dose can be increased weekly up to 7.5 mg per day.⁷ Regardless of the choice, both of these medications should be continued for 1 to 3 months and then tapered according to patient response.^{6,7}

1. Strada E, Sitenga J, Strada A and Aird G. Morgellons disease: A review of a mysterious psychodermatologic disorder. *J Am Acad Derm.* 2018; 79(3): AB194. doi:10.1016/j.jaad.2018.05.785.
2. Ohn J, Park SY, Moon J, Choe YS and Kim KH. Morgellons Disease. *Ann Dermatol.* 2017; 29(2): 223-225. doi:10.5021/ad.2017.29.2.223.
3. Reid EE and Lio PA. Successful Treatment of Morgellons Disease With Pimozide Therapy. *Arch Dermatol.* 2010; 146(10): 1191-1193. doi:10.1001/archdermatol.2010.276.
4. Pimozide. Lexi-Drugs. Lexicomp. Wolters Kluwer. Hudson, OH. Available at: <https://online.lexi.com>. Accessed June 8, 2021.
5. Yan BY and Jorizzo JL. Management of Morgellons Disease With Low-Dose Trifluoperazine. *JAMA Dermatol.* 2018; 154(2): 216-218. doi:10.1001/jamadermatol.2017.5175.
6. Risperidone. Lexi-Drugs. Lexicomp. Wolters Kluwer. Hudson, OH. Available at: <https://online.lexi.com>. Accessed June 15, 2021.
7. Olanzapine. Lexi-Drugs. Lexicomp. Wolters Kluwer. Hudson, OH. Available at: <https://online.lexi.com>. Accessed June 15, 2021.