

Are you informed?

The federal government, health care professionals and consumer advocates are taking action in curbing the misuse of atypical anti-psychotics in long-term care facilities such as nursing homes. Why? Because these drugs when used incorrectly with elders can be dangerous and cause significant harm. Studies have found high rates of misuse of these drugs amongst residents who live in long-term care facilities such as: nursing homes, assisted living and adult family homes.

The Office of the Washington State Long-Term Care Ombudsman, together with local Ombudsmen are working together to inform residents, their surrogate decision makers and the public about the adverse side effects to taking atypical anti-psychotics (such as Risperdal and Risperidone). Additionally, we are informing long-term care residents about their legal rights to be informed about their medications and to be free of chemical restraints.



“She changed so fast!

Her dementia isn't easy, but the drugs being used to sedate her, have taken “her” and her quality of life away.

Isn't there a better way?"

42%

of residents are given anti-psychotic drugs in direct violation of nursing home prescribing guidelines.

83%

of the medications were used for reasons other than their intended use (referred to as “off label”).

22%

of antipsychotics were prescribed to nursing home residents in excessive amounts or for too long of a time.

- Many people find the change in behavior caused by Dementia to be the most challenging and distressing effect of the disease.
- The Misuse of antipsychotic drugs (such as Risperdal), as a chemical restraint, is one of the most common and long-standing, **BUT PREVENTABLE**, practices causing serious harm to residents in long-term care today.
- Antipsychotic drugs that are prescribed inappropriately, especially for elderly and for people who have a dementing illness, can have serious, life threatening side effects.



**“I feel like I’m
not even alive,
I don’t feel right,
and I don’t understand why.”**

The Washington State Long-term Care Ombudsman is informing individuals who live in long-term care facilities and others about the known harmful side effects caused by misuse of atypical anti-psychotics, how to recognize the misuse, residents rights and what to do about it. This initiative is funded by a grant from the Washington Attorney General’s Office, which recovered funds from Janssen Pharmaceuticals in a settlement addressing the company’s marketing of atypical antipsychotic drugs, such as Risperdal, Risperdal Consta, Risperdal M-Tab, and Invega.

**To Contact Your Local Long-term
Care Ombudsman:**



**For More Information
Call Toll Free: 1-800-562-6028
or visit www.waombudsman.org**