

Clozapine Initiation Information Package

You and your treatment team have decided that you may have a therapeutic benefit from Clozapine medication to improve your quality of life while you live with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder. The expectation is that you will see improvements in areas like your ability to think and plan, a reduction in delusional, racing or suspicious thoughts, and/or a reduction in hallucinations.

People that are prescribed Clozapine require careful monitoring (especially during the first few weeks of treatment) because while the medication can be highly effective, it may cause side effects in some individuals. To reduce these risks, our team follows established safety and monitoring protocols that watch for these potential side effects and allows us to evaluate them quickly and adjust dosing carefully based on your clinical response and tolerability. You and your caregivers are asked to promptly report any new or worsening symptoms so that appropriate interventions can be implemented right away.

Our goal is to balance the therapeutic benefits of Clozapine with proactive monitoring and supportive care to maximize both safety and treatment effectiveness.

Please review the information below together with your treatment team to help you understand the process for initiating Clozapine in the community and the expectations at the Medication Clinic at Hotel Dieu Grace Healthcare.

Client Preparation for Initiation of Clozapine

Your clinical team at the Medication Clinic at Hotel Dieu Grace Healthcare (HDGH) will evaluate which option (below) will be selected for you based on the physician's assessment of "high risk" potentials such as history of seizures, cardiovascular disease, or other health conditions that may increase likelihood of side effects or adverse reactions during initiation.

We need your commitment. Please be aware that you are required to stay for long periods of time at the Medication Clinic for monitoring, and should come prepared with food and/or any items you wish for entertainment (such as phone, laptop, book, etc). There is free hospital Wi-Fi and a cafeteria that can be accessed.

We ask that you do not drive, operate heavy machinery, or participate in activities that require concentration such as swimming, climbing, etc. during the initial days of Clozapine therapy.

Please let the nurse at HDGH and your prescribing doctor know if there are any changes to your smoking/caffeine intake during your Clozapine initiation.

The next page outlines the two monitoring options. The Medication Clinic's clinical team will be in touch to notify you which option has been selected prior to your first scheduled appointment. Please review to ensure you are aware of what to expect for the first two weeks of initiation.

Missed Appointment Policy

Please be aware that if you miss or do not attend a Clozapine initiation appointment, the Medication Clinic nurse will attempt to contact you / your emergency contact number in order to discuss potential options. If a Clozapine initiation appointment is missed and an immediate safe solution for dose monitoring cannot be determined, a notification letter will be sent to the referring physician and you will be discharged.

Option A - 8 Hour Intermittent Day

Here is the schedule for your trial plan to start a medication called Clozapine. Option A has been selected for you based on your current health status and ability to have accompaniment for your appointments. This plan will help ensure that you have a good transition to life with this new medication. It is very important that you share information about your health and wellbeing during this time period.

Day 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will receive a “Getting started on Clozapine: A Guide for patients and Families” package. This guide is designed to assist patients, their relatives, and caregivers to better understand the risks associated with Gen-Clozapine and monitoring requirements. • Baseline vital signs will be taken before the nurse provides you with the 1st dose of Clozapine at 8am • You will wait for 1 hour for another set of vital signs to be taken (sitting and standing) • If stable, you may leave the clinic but must return within 2-3 hours for another assessment • If stable at second check in, you may leave the clinic a second time but must return 2-3 hours for one last assessment <p>*You must be accompanied by a family member/ friend at all times when leaving the clinic and are asked not to drive or participate in activities that require concentration</p>
Day 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline vital signs will be taken before the nurse provides you with the 2nd dose of Clozapine at 8am • You will wait for 1 hour for another set of vital signs to be taken (sitting and standing) • If stable, you may leave the clinic but must return within 2-3 hours for another assessment • If stable at second check in, you may leave the clinic a second time but must return 2-3 hours for one last assessment <p>*You must be accompanied by a family member/ friend at all times when leaving the clinic and are asked not to drive or participate in activities that require concentration</p>
Day 3-14	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should be seen regularly and assessed by the treatment team until target dose reached. The standard is a 30 minute appointment scheduled on day 7 and day 14 after Clozapine initiation where the nurse will assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vital signs (sitting and standing) ○ Waist Circumference ○ Weight ○ Review of any side effects ○ Ensure client has their first weekly CBC appointment completed
Day 14 +	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure you read the “Getting started on Clozapine: A Guide for patients and Families” package that will be provided to you by the nurse. • You should be aware of and evaluate for signs or symptoms of infection (i.e. tiredness, weakness, fever, sore throat or flu-like symptoms) and/or any other side effects (i.e. rapid heart rate when resting, chest pain, shortness of breath, nausea/ vomiting). The most common side effects are drowsiness/sedation, dizziness, hyper-salivation, tachycardia (racing heart beat) and constipation. • You are highly encouraged to notify your treatment team of any changes in habit with caffeine intake and/or smoking as this may change the effect of Clozapine.



Option B – 6 Hour Day

Here is the schedule for your trial plan to start a medication called Clozapine. Option B has been selected for you based on your current health status and/or lack of accompaniment for your appointments. This plan will help ensure that you have a good transition to life with this new medication. It is very important that you share information about your health and wellbeing during this time period.

<p>Day 1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will receive a “Getting started on Clozapine: A Guide for patients and Families” package. This guide is designed to assist patients, their relatives, and caregivers to better understand the risks associated with Gen-Clozapine and monitoring requirements. • Baseline vital signs will be taken (sitting and standing) before the nurse provides you with the 1st dose of Clozapine at 8am • 9am 1 hour post dose vital signs will be taken (sitting and standing) • 11:30pm vitals will be taken (sitting and standing) • 2pm vitals will be taken (sitting and standing) <p>*You will stay at the clinic for the 6-hour duration</p>
<p>Day 2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline vital signs will be taken (sitting and standing) before the nurse provides you with the 2nd dose of Clozapine at 8am • 9am 1 hour post dose vital signs will be taken (sitting and standing) • 11:30pm vitals will be taken (sitting and standing) • 2pm vitals will be taken (sitting and standing) <p>*You will stay at the clinic for the 6-hour duration</p>
<p>Day 3-14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You should be seen regularly and assessed by the treatment team until target dose reached. The standard is a 30 minute appointment scheduled on day 7 and day 14 after Clozapine initiation where the nurse will assess: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vital signs (sitting and standing) ○ Waist Circumference ○ Weight ○ Review of any side effects ○ Ensure client has their second/third weekly CBC appointment completed
<p>Day 14 +</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure you read the “Getting started on Clozapine: A Guide for patients and Families” package that will be provided to you by the nurse. • You should be aware of and evaluate for signs or symptoms of infection (i.e. tiredness, weakness, fever, sore throat or flu-like symptoms) and/or any other side effects (i.e. rapid heart rate when resting, chest pain, shortness of breath, nausea/ vomiting). The most common side effects are drowsiness/sedation, dizziness, hyper-salivation, tachycardia (racing heart beat) and constipation. • You are highly encouraged to notify your treatment team of any changes in habit with caffeine intake and/or smoking as this may change the effect of Clozapine.

