

ACTIVE LEARNING TEMPLATE: Medication

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MEDICATION Generic: guaifenesin, Brand: Alfen Jr, Altarussin, Mucinex, Robitussin, Guaiatuss, Scot-tussin REVIEW MODULE CHAPTER _____

CATEGORY CLASS Therapeutic: Allergy, cold, and cough remedies; expectorant

PURPOSE OF MEDICATION A cough medicine that thins mucus so it's easier to cough up.

Expected Pharmacological Action

Increases respiratory tract fluid → thins mucus → decreases thickness of secretions., Makes mucus less sticky so it's easier to cough out.

Therapeutic Use

Relief of cough associated with viral upper respiratory infections (URIs).

Complications

Skin: rash, hives, GI: nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, stomach pain, Neuro: dizziness, headache

Medication Administration

Adults (PO): IR 200–400 mg every 4 hr; ER 600–1200 mg every 12 hr (max 2400 mg/day), Children 6–12 yr (PO): IR 100–200 mg every 4 hr; ER 600 mg every 12 hr (max 1200 mg/day), Children 4–6 yr (PO): IR 50–100 mg every 4 hr (max 600 mg/day), Always give with a full glass of water., ER tablets must be swallowed whole (do not crush, chew, or break).

Contraindications/Precautions

Hypersensitivity, Some forms contain alcohol (avoid if intolerant), Some forms contain aspartame (avoid in PKU patients), Cough lasting >1 week or with fever, rash, or headache, Use caution in patients with diabetes (sugar-containing products), Safety not established in pregnancy/lactation (but often used without harm), Avoid OTC cough/cold products with guaifenesin in children <4 yr

Nursing Interventions

Assess lung sounds, type of cough, and sputum, Encourage fluids (1500–2000 mL/day) to thin secretions, Administer each dose with full glass of water, Do not confuse guaifenesin with guanfacine

Interactions

No significant drug–drug interactions reported.

Client Education

Take with a full glass of water, Sit upright, take deep breaths before coughing to clear mucus effectively, Do not give OTC cough/cold products to children <4 yr, May cause dizziness → avoid driving until effects known, Use sugarless gum, candy, or humid air to soothe dry cough, Call provider if cough lasts >1 week or is accompanied by fever, rash, or headache, Safe storage: keep out of reach of children

Evaluation of Medication Effectiveness

Thinner, looser mucus, Cough becomes more productive, Easier breathing and secretion clearance