

Algorithm for the treatment of irritability in Huntington's disease

Serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI)

First choice drug for:

- non-emergent irritability
- comorbid depression
- comorbid anxiety
- comorbid obsessive-compulsive behaviors

Step 1. Start with low dose

citalopram	(20 mg)
sertaline	(50 mg)
paroxetine	(20 mg)
fluoxetine	(20 mg)
escitalopram	(10 mg)

Though many survey experts chose 4 weeks or more, the authors suggest a shorter 2-4 week dosing interval

Check for adherence

Step 2. Dose optimization

Symptom control often requires mid to high level dosing

citalopram	(20-40 mg)
sertaline	(50-200 mg)
paroxetine	(20-60 mg)
fluoxetine	(20-60 mg)
escitalopram	(10-20 mg)

Reassess response and side effects at each dosage increment

Check for adherence

Step 3. Alternate mono- or combination therapy

If inadequate response to SSRI, experts chose the following alternatives (listed in order of preference):

- add APD
- add AED
- switch to another SSRI
- switch to APD
- switch to AED
- add BZD
- switch to BZD

Authors suggest trial of propranolol

If response remains inadequate, authors suggest second trial of switching drugs within class

Check for adherence

Antipsychotic (APD)

First choice drug for:

- severe aggressive behaviors
- comorbid psychosis
- comorbid impulsivity

Alternative choice drug for:

- less severe irritability

Step 1. Start with low dose

olanzapine	(2.5-10 mg)
risperidone	(0.5-2 mg)
haloperidol	(0.5-2 mg)
quetiapine	(25-200 mg)
tiapride*	(50-200 mg)
sulpiride*	(100-600 mg)

*tiapride, sulpiride available in Europe

Check for adherence

Step 2. Dose optimization

•urgent as outpatient: 2-3 days - weekly

•less severe: 2-4 weeks

Reassess response and side effects at each dose increment

Check for adherence

Step 3. Alternate mono- or combination therapy

If inadequate response to APD, experts chose the following alternatives (listed in order of preference):

- switch to another APD
- add SSRI
- add AED
- add BZD
- switch to AED
- switch to SSRI

If response remains inadequate, authors suggest second trial of switching drugs within class

Check for adherence

Abbreviations

AED	mood stabilizing anti epileptic drug
APD	antipsychotic
BZD	benzodiazepine
SSRI	selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor

