



# PsychoTropical

## Psychopharmacology, Neuropharmacology & Toxicology Expertise

Jan 2020

**Dr Ken Gillman**

**Anaesthesia in patients on MAOIs**

Convener: MAOI  
International  
Experts Group

Dear Anaesthesia Colleague,

Expertise in:

I am an expert on MAOIs and their interactions. A patient who is due for surgery has obtained this letter from my [website](#). This letter is to help you assess and advise on the advantages and disadvantages of ceasing treatment with MAOIs prior to surgery. Reconsideration of the question of the safety of anaesthesia in patients on MAOIs is especially relevant because the information available in some guidelines and other sources is out-of-date, inaccurate, or unhelpful.

Psycho-  
pharmacology

Serotonin toxicity

**MAOI treatment should never be ceased without consultation with the prescribing specialist.** A tragic example of failure to do this is revealed in [this account of a patient's experience](#).

Neuroleptic  
malignant  
syndrome

Drug interactions

<https://psychotropical.com/patient-stories-the-farmers-shotgun/>

MAOIs

I have a number of peer-reviewed scholarly publications specifically reviewing MAOIs [1-6], one of those reviews was published in the *British Journal of Anaesthesia*. I am the convener of the respected 'MAOI International Experts Group' which provides advice to doctors who use, and wish to learn more about, MAOI drugs. My google scholar profile is here; note that my H-index (27) is higher than most professors:

TCA's

SSRIs

SNRIs

Information at:

<https://scholar.google.com/citations?user=ea6KeD0AAAAJ&hl=en>

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I have extensive experience of using monoamine oxidase inhibitor (MAOI) drugs and I am regarded as a leading world expert in the field of MAOIs and their interactions.

In order to assist anaesthetists I have updated my review of this subject with the assistance of both the eminent Professor of Anaesthetics, Harvey Rosenbaum (who holds the David Geffen chair at UCLA), and also the world-renowned clinical toxicologist and pharmacologist, Professor Ian Whyte. Here is the [link to that review](#).

<https://psychotropical.com/maois-and-anaesthesia/>

Remember, nowadays almost all patients on MAOIs are taking them because they have **tried multiple other treatments which have failed**, and this is the only one that works. Ceasing it for anything other than exceptional reasons may be an unwise decision. As always, our decisions are a balance of risks.

If you wish to look there is much referenced information on my website, which is a world-renowned hub for information about MAOIs; in addition there are the scientific peer-reviewed papers that I have published.

I am available for information or advice, via email, or via Skype:

See <https://psychotropic.com/contact-dr-gillman/>

Yours Sincerely,

Dr. Ken Gillman

#### References

1. Finberg, J. and P. Gillman, *Pharmacology of MAO-B inhibitors and the cheese reaction*, in *International Review of Neurobiology*, M. Youdim and P. Riederer, Editors. 2011, Elsevier Inc. Academic Press.: Burlington. p. 169-190.
2. Gillman, P.K., *CNS toxicity involving methylene blue: the exemplar for understanding and predicting drug interactions that precipitate serotonin toxicity*. *Journal of Psychopharmacology*, 2011. **25**(3): p. 429-3.
3. Gillman, P.K., *Advances pertaining to the pharmacology and interactions of irreversible nonselective monoamine oxidase inhibitors*. *Journal of Clinical Psychopharmacology*, 2011. **31**(1): p. 66-74.
4. Gillman, P.K., "Much ado about nothing": *monoamine oxidase inhibitors, drug interactions, and dietary tyramine*. *CNS Spectr*, 2017: p. 1-3.
5. Gillman, P.K., *A reassessment of the safety profile of monoamine oxidase inhibitors: elucidating tired old tyramine myths*. *J Neural Transm (Vienna)*, 2018. **125**(11): p. 1707-1717.
6. Gillman, P.K., S. Feinberg, and L. Fochtmann, *Revitalizing monoamine oxidase inhibitors: A call for action*. *CNS spectrums*, 2019: p. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S1092852919001196>.