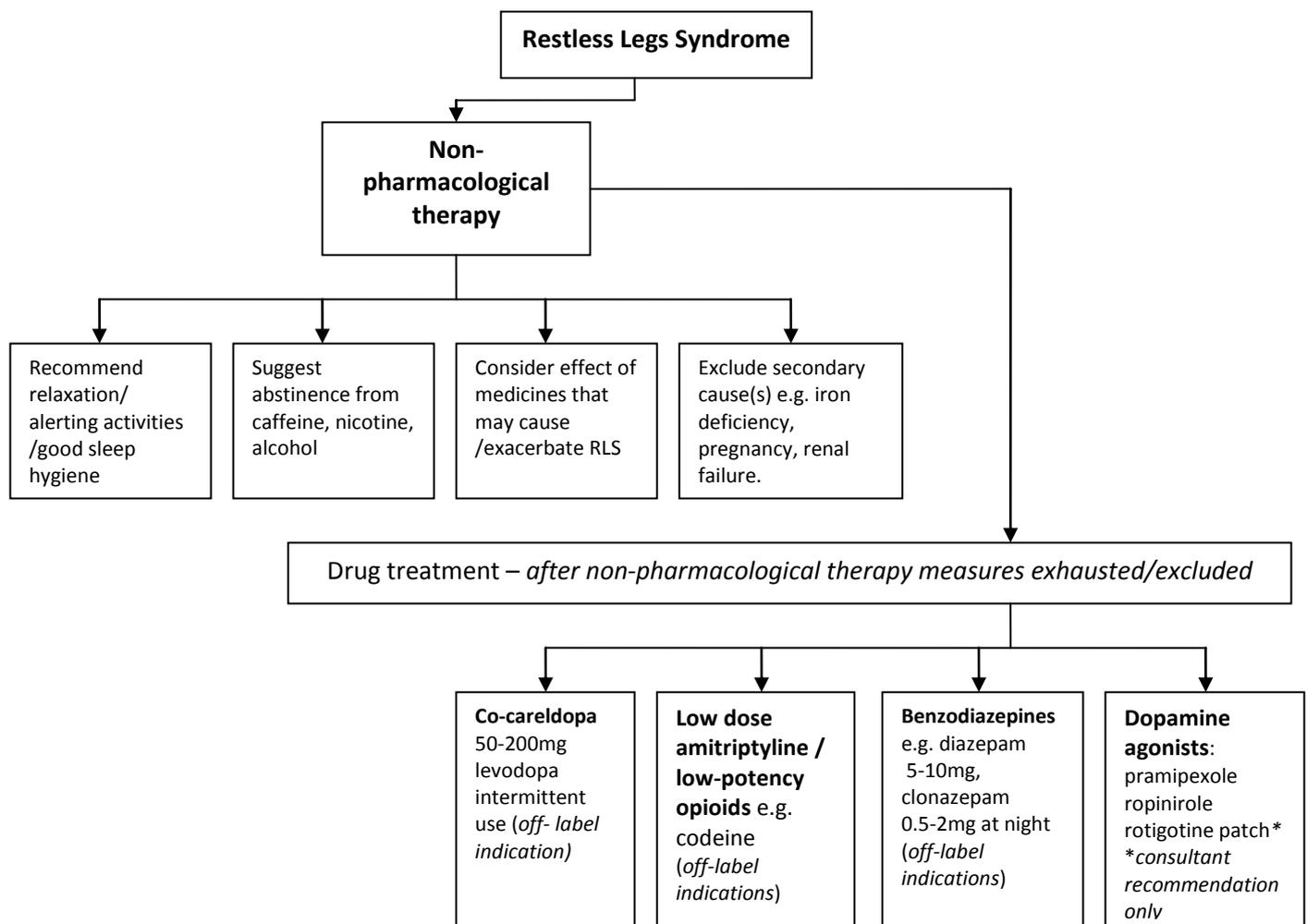


## Guidelines for the Treatment of Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)



Refer to the current BNF /SPC for information on dose, side-effects and contra-indications

### Recommendations:

- All patients with RLS should be offered reassurance and **non-pharmacological interventions** including sleep hygiene methods, relaxation exercises, distraction techniques and stretching and massaging of affected limbs.
- Drug treatment should only be started after excluding potential secondary causes of RLS such as iron deficiency, pregnancy or renal failure and differential diagnoses such as muscle cramps, arthritis, neuropathy or drug-induced akathisia.
- Symptoms should be assessed using the International Restless Legs Syndrome (IRLS) Study Group Rating Scale questionnaire (*copy attached*).
- Pramipexole and ropinirole should be reserved for persistent, severe cases where the symptoms have a significant impact on quality of life, ability to sleep and daytime functioning. Modified release versions are not licensed for RLS and are more expensive than standard release versions which are now available generically.
- Rotigotine patches should only be prescribed on consultant recommendation in severe cases when treatment with pramipexole and ropinirole has failed.
- Dopamine agonists are often poorly tolerated and can have unpleasant, significant side effects e.g. nausea, constipation, hypotension, confusion, pathological gambling. Other unlicensed preparations are used for the treatment of RLS and may be better tolerated.
- Although included in guidance produced by the International Restless Legs Syndrome Study Group (IRLSSG), gabapentin and pregabalin are not approved locally for this off-label indication.
- **Patients treated with dopamine agonists should be assessed every 3 months for signs of worsening symptoms and continued effectiveness.** Evidence for long term efficacy limited and observations suggest that efficacy declines over time.
- Refer for specialist investigation in refractory cases.

## Restless leg Syndrome Rating Scale

International Restless Legs Syndrome (IRLS) Study Group

Have the patient rate his/her symptoms for the following ten questions.

The patient and not the examiner should make the ratings, but the examiner should be available to clarify any misunderstandings the patient may have about the questions.

The examiner should mark the patient's answers on the form.

### In the past week...

(1) Overall, how would you rate the RLS discomfort in your legs or arms?

- \_ (4) Very severe
- \_ (3) Severe
- \_ (2) Moderate
- \_ (1) Mild
- \_ (0) None

### In the past week...

6) How severe was your RLS as a whole?

- \_ (4) Very severe
- \_ (3) Severe
- \_ (2) Moderate
- \_ (1) Mild
- \_ (0) None

### In the past week...

(2) Overall, how would you rate the need to move around because of your RLS symptoms?

- \_ (4) Very severe
- \_ (3) Severe
- \_ (2) Moderate
- \_ (1) Mild
- \_ (0) None

### In the past week...

(7) How often did you get RLS symptoms?

- \_ (4) Very often (6 to 7 days in 1 week)
- \_ (3) Often (4 to 5 days in 1 week)
- \_ (2) Sometimes (2 to 3 days in 1 week)
- \_ (1) Occasionally (1 day in 1 week)
- \_ (0) Never

### In the past week...

(3) Overall, how much relief of your RLS arm or leg discomfort did you get from moving around?

- \_ (4) No relief
- \_ (3) Mild relief
- \_ (2) Moderate relief
- \_ (1) Either complete or almost complete relief
- \_ (0) No RLS symptoms to be relieved

### In the past week...

(8) When you had RLS symptoms, how severe were they on average?

- \_ (4) Very severe (8 hours or more per 24 hour)
- \_ (3) Severe (3 to 8 hours per 24 hour)
- \_ (2) Moderate (1 to 3 hours per 24 hour)
- \_ (1) Mild (less than 1 hour per 24 hour)
- \_ (0) None

### In the past week...

How severe was your sleep disturbance due to your RLS symptoms?

- \_ (4) Very severe life?
- \_ (3) Severe
- \_ (2) Moderate
- \_ (1) Mild
- \_ (0) None

### (9) In the past week...

Overall, how severe was the impact of your RLS symptoms on your ability to carry out your daily affairs, for example carrying out a satisfactory family, home, social, school or work

- \_ (4) Very severe
- \_ (3) Severe
- \_ (2) Moderate
- \_ (1) Mild
- \_ (0) None

### In the past week...

(5) How severe was your tiredness or sleepiness during the day due to your RLS symptoms?

- \_ (4) Very severe
- \_ (3) Severe
- \_ (2) Moderate
- \_ (1) Mild
- \_ (0) None

### In the past week...

(10) How severe was your mood disturbance due to your RLS symptoms - for example angry, depressed, sad, anxious or irritable?

- \_ (4) Very severe
- \_ (3) Severe
- \_ (2) Moderate
- \_ (1) Mild
- \_ (0) None

### Sum of scores =

**Scoring criteria are: Mild (score 1-10); Moderate (score 11-20); Severe (score 21-30); Very severe (score 31-40)**

1. Answers for this IRLS are scored from 4 for the first (top) answer (usually 'very severe') to 0 for the last answer (usually none). All items are scored. The sum of the item scores serves as the scale score.  
*The International Restless Legs Syndrome Study Group holds the copyright for this scale.*