**GENERIC AND PROPRIETARY NAMES**
- Zomig (zolmitriptan).
- Imitrex (sumatriptan).

**ACTION**
- Zolmitriptan and sumatriptan are both triptans or 5HT1 (serotonin) agonists.
- Triptans bind to specific serotonin receptors, reducing blood vessel dilation and the inflammation and pain of migraine.

**CLASSIFICATION**
- Antimigraine drugs.

**INDICATIONS**
- Used to relieve migraine symptoms. They are not suitable for the prevention of migraine.
- Sumatriptan, via subcutaneous injection, can be used for cluster headaches.

**CONTRAINDICATIONS**
- Not for use as prophylaxis.
- Ischaemic heart disease.
- History of myocardial infarction.
- History of cerebrovascular accident or transient ischaemic attacks.
- Angina.
- Uncontrolled hypertension.

**CAUTIONS**
- Conditions that predispose to coronary artery disease.
- Hepatic impairment.
- Pregnancy and breastfeeding.
- Older people.
- Other migraine therapies.

**COMMON SIDE-EFFECTS**
- Tingling, heat or pressure sensations.
- Flushing.
- Weakness or sensation of heaviness.
- Fatigue.
- Drowsiness.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Chest pain.
- Nasal discomfort or irritation from the nasal spray preparations.

**INTERACTIONS**
- Monoamine oxidase inhibitors and some other antidepressant medication.
- Some antiviral, antifungal and antibacterial medications.
- Ergotamine.

**ADMINISTRATION**
- Oral.
- Intranasal.
- Sumatriptan is available as subcutaneous injection.
- Usually only one dose is needed, but a second may be taken after at least two hours (one hour for injection).
- Currently this is prescription-only medication, but proposals to change this are being considered.

**NURSING CONSIDERATIONS**
- Assess for side-effects of tingling, burning, numbness, flushing or feeling of pressure.
- Assess stress level and mechanisms for coping with migraine.
- Assess avoidance of factors predisposing to migraine, such as caffeine and chocolate, and give appropriate advice.
- Provide a calm environment during migraine attack.
- Assess therapeutic response and need for second dose.

**PATIENT TEACHING**
- Inform patients of the importance of only using their medication for a headache that they recognise as a migraine.
- Medication should be taken as soon as the headache pain begins. Patients who have an aura stage should wait until the headache pain starts before taking the medication.
- These drugs may cause drowsiness, so ensure that patients are aware not drive or operate machinery if affected.

**REFERENCES**