

**Did you know...? : that Symmetrel can be of great value in the management of herpes zoster in the elderly or debilitated ...**

**Contributors**

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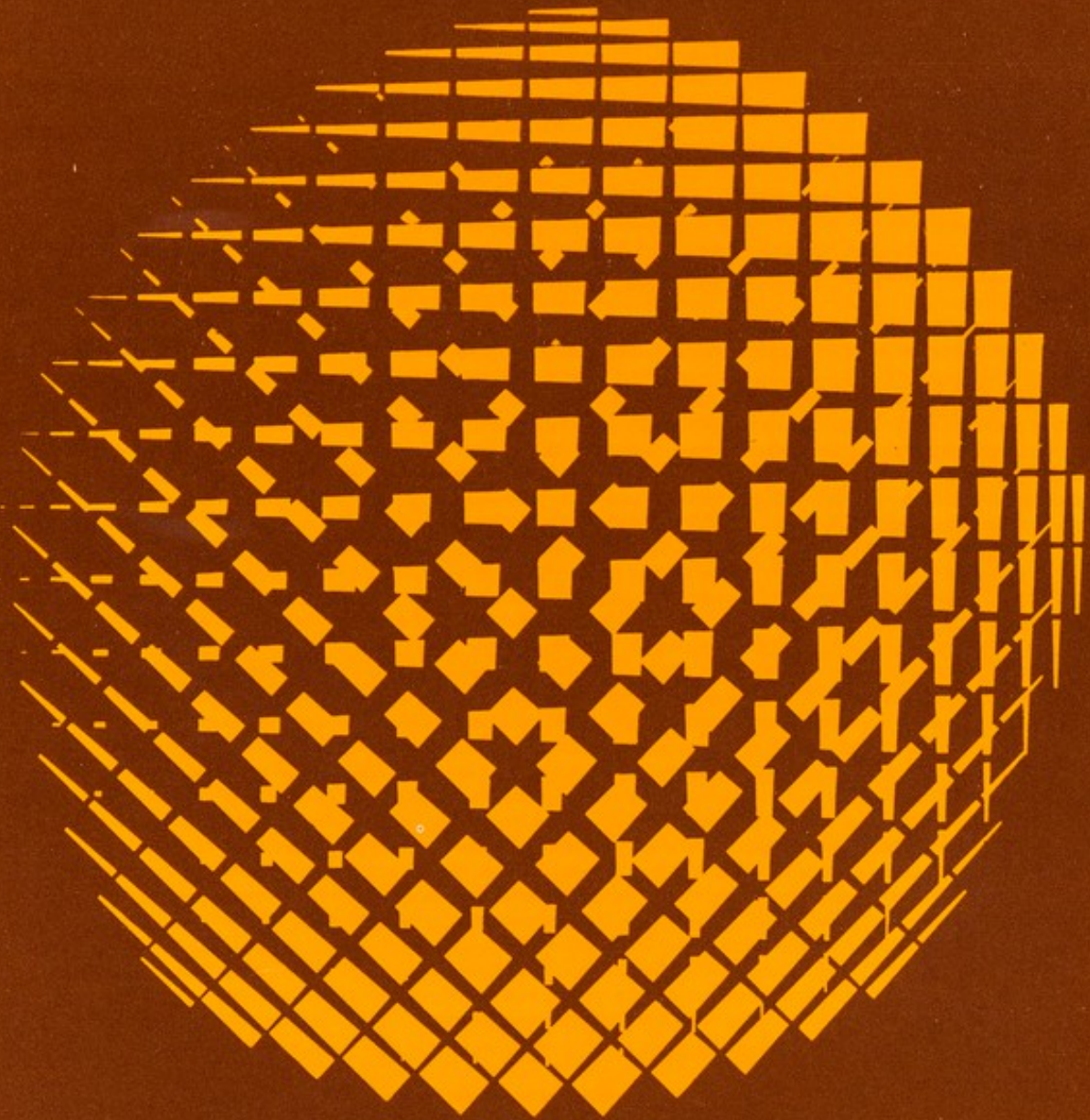
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# Did you know...?



*The illustration is an example of 'kinetic' or 'optical art'. The basic structure is a grid which graduates serially from a 4-sided figure with no sides parallel, to virtually a point. The structure is connected to points on the circumference of a circle. An identical structure is superimposed to produce a moiré effect which is entirely logical in any position into which it is rotated. The original picture has the facility to rotate the superimposed structure.*

**...that Symmetrel can be of great value in the management of herpes zoster in the elderly or debilitated**

**...by inhibiting the development of that troublesome sequel to which such patients are especially prone:  
*post-herpetic neuralgia?***

**'This double-blind placebo-controlled trial confirmed the impression made in an open study that amantadine (Symmetrel) given early in the infection can reduce significantly the proportion of patients who experience pain of long duration in acute herpes zoster.'**

**Reference**

Galbraith, A.W. (1973) Treatment of acute herpes zoster with amantadine hydrochloride (Symmetrel). Br. Med. J. 942, 693

**it's worth remembering**  
**Symmetrel<sup>®</sup>**  
amantadine hydrochloride

# Symmetrel<sup>®</sup>

amantadine hydrochloride

# Geigy

## capsules and syrup

### Appearance, composition and pharmaceutical form

Symmetrel is available as brownish red, flexible gelatin capsules, imprinted "Geigy," each containing 100mg amantadine hydrochloride, and as a clear, citrus flavoured syrup containing 50mg/5ml of the active ingredient amantadine hydrochloride.

### Principal therapeutic actions Symmetrel capsules and syrup

#### Parkinson's disease

Extensive clinical trials confirm that Symmetrel can bring about a rapid and worthwhile improvement in the patient's overall condition above that already achieved with other therapies.

#### Herpes zoster

Symmetrel warrants serious consideration in the management of herpes zoster. This has been confirmed by a large double-blind study involving 100 patients which showed that Symmetrel can significantly reduce the proportion of patients experiencing pain of long duration.

#### A<sub>2</sub> and A/New Jersey/76 and A/Moscow/92/77 influenza

Symmetrel capsules inhibit viral activity predominantly against A<sub>2</sub>, A/New Jersey/76 and A/Moscow/92/77 influenza. Given as a treatment it will reduce the symptoms of influenza.

Used prophylactically Symmetrel rapidly protects patients against influenza infection. Symmetrel does not interfere with antibody production.

#### Indications

*Symmetrel capsules and syrup*  
Parkinson's disease  
Herpes zoster

#### *Symmetrel capsules*

Prophylaxis and treatment:

A<sub>2</sub>, A/New Jersey/76 and A/Moscow/92/77 influenza.

#### Dosage Parkinson's disease

The optimum dosage may differ from patient to patient. However, it is suggested that 100mg daily be added to existing therapy. Depending on clinical response, this dosage may, after one week, be increased to 100mg twice daily.

#### Herpes zoster

The treatment should be started as soon as possible after the diagnosis has been made. The dosage is 100mg twice daily for 14 days. If post-herpetic pain persists after this period it is recommended that treatment be continued for a further 14 days.

#### A<sub>2</sub>, A/New Jersey/76 and A/Moscow/92/77 influenza

Treatment:

Adults: one capsule to be taken twice daily for 5-7 days or at the discretion of the physician.

#### Prophylaxis:

Adults: one capsule to be taken twice daily for as long as protection from influenza infection is required. In most instances this is expected to be for 7-10 days.

It is not recommended that the dosage be increased above that stated. It may be found convenient to administer the drug at about 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

#### Note: Herpes zoster

It is recommended that the drug be given to elderly or debilitated patients in whom the physician suspects that a severe and painful rash could occur.

#### Note: A<sub>2</sub>, A/New Jersey/76 and A/Moscow/92/77 influenza

It is suggested that Symmetrel capsules be given to patients suffering from clinical influenza in whom complications might be expected to occur. In addition, Symmetrel capsules are recommended prophylactically in cases particularly at risk, for example those with chronic respiratory disease or debilitating conditions, the elderly, those living in crowded conditions and for individuals in families where influenza has already been diagnosed, or those in essential services who are unvaccinated.

#### Contraindications

Although no incompatibilities with other drugs have become known, caution should be exercised if dextroamphetamine or other central nervous stimulants are used during Symmetrel therapy. It is not recommended that Symmetrel be used to treat individuals who are subject to convulsions, or who have a history of gastric ulceration. Although there are no specific contraindications to the drug being administered to a person who has received a recent dose of influenza vaccine, such administration would be considered unnecessary.

#### Precaution

Use in pregnancy: Symmetrel has not been studied in pregnant women. The use of this drug in women of childbearing age should be undertaken only after weighing the possible risks to the foetus against benefit to the patient. Symmetrel has been reported to be embryotoxic and teratogenic in rats at 50mg/kg/day, about 12 times the recommended human dose, but not at 37mg/kg/day. Embryotoxic and teratogenic effects were not seen in rabbits which received up to 25 times the usual recommended adult human dose.

#### Side-effects

Manifestations of central nervous system effects such as nervousness, insomnia, dizziness or convulsions have occurred. Some psychic reactions such as hallucinations or feelings of detachment may be produced.

#### Accidental overdosage

There is no specific antidote to Symmetrel. Supportive therapeutic measures aimed at those symptoms arising from excessive central stimulation should be instituted.

#### Pharmaceutical precautions

Protect from heat and moisture

#### Legal category

Symmetrel is not subject to poisons regulations but it is recommended that it be used only under medical supervision.

#### Availability

	Basic N.H.S. price
Capsules 100 mg	
Containers of 100	£16.62
Syrup 50 mg/5 ml	
Bottles of 150 ml	£3.12

#### Product licence numbers

Capsules	0001/0006 and PA 11/2/2
Syrup	0001/0067 and PA 11/2/1

Full prescribing information is available.

#### Product licence holder Geigy Pharmaceuticals

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