ETHIONAMIDE (ETA)
Fact Sheet

Ethionamide is a simple molecule that is related to vitamin B_3 (niacin).

Dose: 250 – 1000 mg per day (usually in divided doses)

Administration: Oral, with food

Excretion: Hepatic

Distribution: Widely distributed, good CSF penetration

Adverse Reactions

Gastrointestinal

1. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain and metallic taste are often seen.
2. Treatment – start therapy by gradually increasing dose, give with food, treat symptomatically. Divided dose may help control GI side effects.

Hepatotoxicity

1. Occasionally seen. Elevated transaminases. Follow liver enzymes.

Other toxicities

1. Hypothyroidism – occasionally seen. Follow thyroid functions tests monthly.
2. Gynecomastia, impotence, menstrual irregularities and alopecia have been reported.
3. Postural hypotension, depression, asthenia, drowsiness.
4. Management of diabetes may be more difficult.

Drug Interactions

Alcohol — ETA may potentiate psychotoxic effects of alcohol.

Antihypertensives — Since ETA has ganglionic blocking action, it may potentiate the postural hypotension produced by other drugs such as antihypertensives, narcotics like meperidine, etc.

Cycloserine — ETA potentiates the toxic CNS effects of CS.

Monitoring

1. Monitor liver function tests periodically during therapy.