Table 3

Antidepressant and anticonvulsant treatments for neuropathic pain

Medication	Initial dose	NNT for 50% pain reduction[26]	Titration	Comments	Duration of trial
Amitriptyline	10 mg nocte	3.6	Increase every 3-7 days as tolerated to maximum 100 mg	Morning sedation/hangover effect can be negated by taking earlier in the evening e.g. 7 pm	6-8 weeks with at least 2 weeks at maximum tolerated dose
Nortriptyline	10 mg nocte	3.6	Increase every 3-7 days as tolerated to 75 mg maximum (50 mg in the elderly)	Potentially better tolerated in the elderly	6-8 weeks with at least 2 weeks at maximum tolerated dose
Duloxetine	30 mg od	6.4	Increase weekly to 60 mg bd maximum	GI upset common	4 weeks
Gabapentin	100 mg tds or 300 mg nocte	7.2	Increase weekly by 300 mg/day to maximum 3,600 mg daily	Lower doses required in the elderly and in renal impairment	3-8 weeks for titration followed by 2 weeks at maximum tolerated dose
Pregabalin	75 mg bd	7.7	Increase weekly by 150 mg/day to 600 mg/day maximum	More linear absorption profile compared with gabapentin. Similar side effects of sedation and weight gain	4 weeks
Carbamazepine	100 mg daily	-	Increase weekly by 200 mg/day. 1,600 mg/day total	Leukopaenia (10%), with neutropaenia in 1-10%	6-8 weeks