chamomile (Matricaria chamomilla, Anthemis nobilis) (Kam-o-meal)

Other Names:
German, Hungarian, or common chamomile (Matricaria chamomilla, Matricaria recutita), Roman, English, or common chamomile (Anthemis nobilis)

**Classification**
Therapeutic: sedative/hypnotics

**Common Uses**
PO: Gastrointestinal antispasmodic, digestive aid, and sedative. Topical: Anti-inflammatory for minor skin and mucous membrane (including anogenital) conditions.

**Pharmacokinetics**
Absorption: Unknown.
Distribution: Unknown.
Metabolism and Excretion: Unknown.
Half-life: Unknown.

**TIME/ACTION PROFILE**
ROUTE ONSET PEAK DURATION
PO, Topical unknown unknown unknown

**Contraindications/Precautions**
Contraindicated in: Allergy to chamomile, ragweed, asters, chrysanthemums, and other members of the family Asteraceae/Compositae; OB: Pregnancy and lactation.
Use Cautiously in: Hormone sensitive cancers (may have estrogenic effects); Surgery (discontinue 2 weeks prior to procedure).

**Adverse Reactions/Side Effects**
Derm: contact dermatitis.
Misc: allergic reactions, including ANAPHYLAXIS.

**Interactions**
Natural Product-Drug: Alcohol-containing preparations may interact with di-sulfiram and metronidazole. Theoretically, large chamomile ingestions with anticoagulant and antiplatelet drugs may risk of bleeding. May have additive effects with CNS depressants. May interact with oral contraceptives, estrogen, and tamoxifen.

**Natural/Natural Products:** Theoretically, herbs with anticoagulant or antiplatelet properties may increase bleeding risk when combined with chamomile, including: anise, anethole, bergamot, boldo, capsaicin, cayenne, clove, dandelion, dong qingcui, fengqie, ginger, garlic, ginseng, kava, kava root, licorice, mango, marigold, meadowsweet, prickly ash, onagraceae, papain, passionflower, poplar, quassia, red clover, turmeric, wild carrot, willow, and others.

**Route/Commonly Used Doses**
PO (Adults): Capsules/tablets—400–1600 mg daily in divided doses; Liquid—2–3 heaping teaspoons dried flowers per cup of water as a compress or beverage as needed; Gargle—10 drops of fluid extract per glass of water as needed.

**NURSING IMPLICATIONS**
**Assessment**
- Assess patient for abdominal distention and auscultate for bowel sounds.
- Evaluate sleep pattern and anxiety level prior to initiation of this herbal supplement.
- Note size, location and character of affected skin prior to and after topical application.

**Potential Nursing Diagnoses**
- Acute pain
- Insomnia (Indications)
- Anxiety (Indications)

**Implementation**
- PO: May be taken orally without regard to food intake.
- As a sleep aide take 1 hour prior to retiring.

**Patient/Family Education**
- Discontinue: Discontinued.
- *Note: interspersed asterisks indicate most frequent. Gross Implications indicate generic implications. Randomized indicates include most frequent.*
Topical: As a topical application for skin irritation, apply to skin that has been cleansed with a mild nonalcohol-containing cleanser.

Patient/Family Teaching
- Inform patients that only a small amount of the volatile oil, the active ingredient in chamomile, is released when brewed to make a tea. However, long-term consumption of low concentrations of the volatile oil may have a cumulative therapeutic effect.
- Instruct patients not to take other medications at the same time as the tea as it may inhibit absorption and decrease therapeutic effect of other agents.
- Advise patients on anticoagulant therapy to avoid concomitant use as it may enhance the effect of anticoagulants increasing the potential for bleeding.
- Warn pregnant women to avoid chamomile because of the potential abortifacient effect it may exert. Not recommended for use by breastfeeding women as safety has not been established.
- Teach patients using it topically to observe for allergic reactions and to immediately discontinue use if they develop.

Evaluation
- Relief of abdominal spasm and pain associated with gas.
- Improved digestion and decreased sense of fullness after eating.
- Decrease in anxiety.
- Improved ability to fall asleep.
- Resolution of skin irritation or inflammation.

Why was this drug prescribed for your patient?