Case Study, Chapter 37, Thyroid and Parathyroid Agents

A second-year nursing student has to prepare medication cards for clinical on thyroid and parathyroid agents. The specific medication cards that have to be prepared are for levothyroxine (Synthroid) and calcitriol (Rocaltrol). Additionally, the student nurse has to prepare a patient teaching plan for antithyroid agents. (Learning Objectives 2, 3, and 5)

a. What are the key nursing considerations that need to be reviewed with patients receiving antithyroid agents?
   a. Assess for history of any allergy to any antithyroid drugs, pregnancy and lactation status, pulmonary edema or pulmonary tuberculosis if using strong iodine solutions, assess for skin lesions, vital signs, thyroid function tests
   b. What are the most common adverse reactions for calcitriol (Rocaltrol)? Hypercalcemia and Vitamin D toxicity
   c. What are the indications for levothyroxine (Synthroid)? Replacement therapy in hypothyroidism, pituitary thyroid stimulating hormone suppression in the treatment of euthyroid goiters and in the management of thyroid cancer, thyrotoxicosis in conjunction with other therapy, myxedema coma.
   d. What are the lifespan considerations for a child receiving thyroid and parathyroid agents? Regular monitoring, growth records. Maintenance levels at adult dose occur after puberty and when active growing stops. Serum calcium levels should be closely monitored if child develops hypercalcemia.