



Psychotropic Medications





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Learning Objectives

- * Review the classes of psychotropic medications
- * Describe how psychotropic medications work
- * Identify considerations for seniors, children, and pregnant women





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What are Psychotropic Medications?

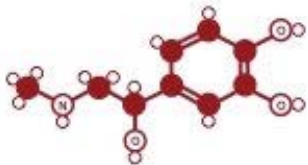






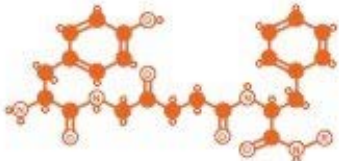
According to National Alliance on Mental Illness: “medicines that alter chemical levels in the brain”

- * Impact mood and behavior by treating symptoms
- * Are usually more effective when combined with psychotherapy
- * Don't cure the disorder
- * May cause side effects





How Do Psychotropic Medications Work?

| | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| ADRENALINE  Fight or flight neurotransmitter | NORADRENALINE  Concentration neurotransmitter | DOPAMINE  Pleasure neurotransmitter | SEROTONIN  Mood neurotransmitter |
| GABA  Calming neurotransmitter | ACETYLCHOLINE  Learning neurotransmitter | GLUTAMATE  Memory neurotransmitter | ENDORPHINS  Euphoria neurotransmitter |



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Different Classes of Psychotropic Medications

- * Antidepressants
- * Antipsychotics
- * Mood stabilizers
- * Anxiolytics (anti-anxiety)
- * Stimulants
- * Medications used to treat substance use



Special Groups: Children, Older Adults, Pregnant Women



Special Groups: Children

- * Not all medications have been studied or approved for use with children or adolescents
- * FDA warnings about potentially dangerous side effects
- * Psychotherapy, family therapy, educational courses, and behavior management techniques should be tried before psychotropic medications
- * Different reactions and side effects than adults
- * Provider might prescribe “off-label”



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Special Groups: Older Adults

- * Higher risk for experiencing bad drug interactions, missing doses, or overdosing
- * Higher sensitivity to dosages
- * Could affect alertness, memory, or coordination, increase fall risk
- * Tracking medication is important
 - * What tool/tools would be helpful in helping an older adult track their medication?





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Special Groups: Pregnant Women

- * NIMH: “No medication is considered perfectly safe for all women at all stages of pregnancy”
- * Small amounts of medication pass into breast milk
- * Potential side effects depend on type of stage of pregnancy and medication taken
- * Monitor for postpartum depression
- * Limited research available



Medical Comorbidity Considerations



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Medical Comorbidity Considerations

- * Atypical antipsychotics place members at risk for metabolic syndrome
- * Hypothyroidism mimics symptoms of depression
- * History of heart attack places members at high risk for depression
- * Steroids should be used cautiously in someone with bipolar disorder
- * Mood stabilizers and antipsychotics can be dangerous during pregnancy





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Adverse Reactions

- * Are uncommon and unexpected; may be an allergic reaction
- * Are likely harmful if the member keeps taking the medication
- * Member should immediately speak to their doctor and follow doctor's directions if there is an adverse reaction
- * May be life threatening





Antidepressant Black Box Warning

- * FDA's strictest labeling warning of prescription drugs
- * Includes warnings about increased risks of suicidality in young adults ages 18-24 during initial treatment
- * Example:

WARNING: SUICIDALITY AND ANTIDEPRESSANT DRUGS

See full prescribing information for complete boxed warning.

Increased risk of suicidal thinking and behavior in children, adolescents, and young adults taking antidepressants for Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) and other psychiatric disorders (5.1).

When using PROZAC and olanzapine in combination, also refer to Boxed Warning section of the package insert for Symbyax.





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Recovery

- * Remember that medication management is only ONE portion of a successful treatment plan!
- * In order to facilitate member recovery, other avenues should also be evaluated and encouraged:
 - * Psychotherapy
 - * Peer & family supports
 - * Community resources





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Questions?





References

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