



Psychotropic Medication

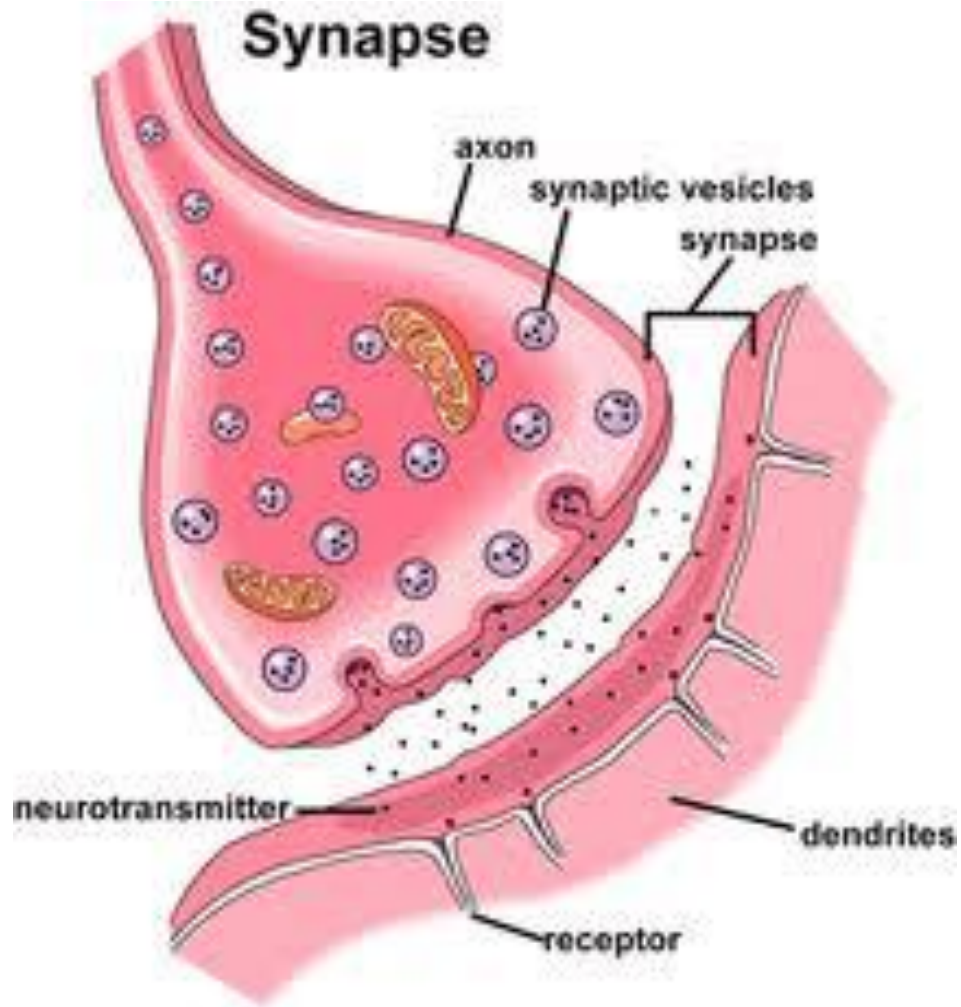
Practical Information For Professional Helpers

Deena McMahon MSW LICSW
McMahon Counseling & Consultation, LLC
Deena.mcmahon@gmail.com

What Are Psychotropic Medications

- Psychotropic drugs is a term used to describe medications that alter chemical levels in the brain which impact mood and behavior.
- Typically these drugs interact with the release and reuptake or absorption of neurotransmitters in the brain and central nervous system.

Neurotransmitters In Action



What Are Neurotransmitters?

- Norepinephrine
- Serotonin
- Dopamine
- Gamma amino-butyric acid (GABA)
- Acetylcholine
- Glutamate

Neurotransmitters Control...

- Anxiety
- Mood
- Learning
- Memory
- Appetite
- Sleep
- Pain
- Pleasure
- Anger
- Aggression

Disorders Related to Imbalance

- Anxiety
- PTSD
- OCD
- Mood Disorders
- Depression
- Bipolar
- ADHD
- Psychotic spectrum disorder

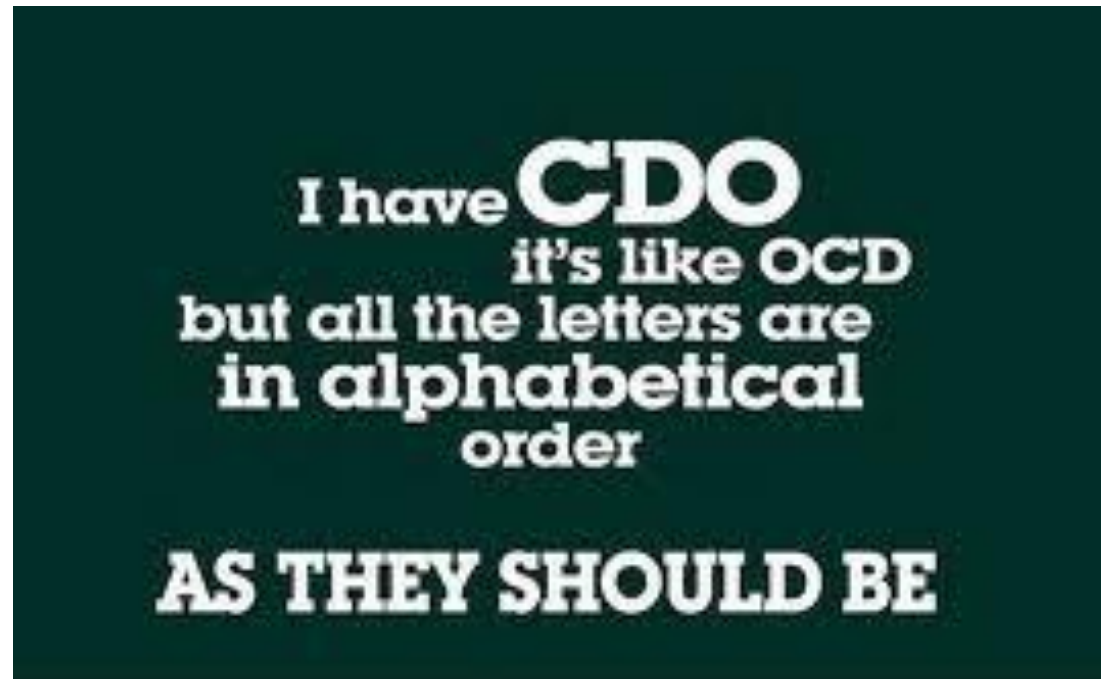
Types of Anxiety Disorders

- Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD)
- Social phobia
- Panic disorder
- Agoraphobia
- Adjustment Disorder (AD)
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)



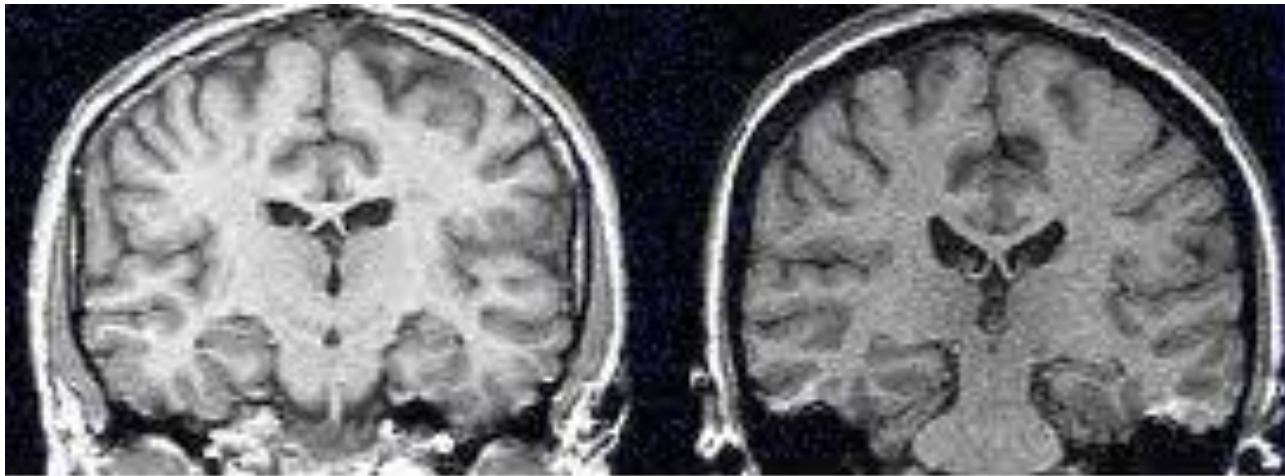
Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

- Chronic condition, often incapacitating, characterized by persistent thoughts and compulsions.



Posttraumatic Stress Disorder

- Developed after surviving unusual and severe mental or physical trauma. Person may feel fear, helplessness, or that they are in danger.



NORMAL

PTSD

Types of Anxiety Medication

- SSRIs
- Benzodiazepines

Antianxiety Medication

- SSRIs
 - Zoloft (sertraline)
 - Paxil (paroxetine)
 - Prozac (fluoxetine)
 - Anafranil (clomipramine)
 - Luvox (fluvoxamine)

Serotonin Gets a Boost

- Regulating mood
- Decreased anxiety
- Regulate sleep and appetite
- Reduce primitive OCD-like urges
- **Preferred for treatment of OCD**

How Safe Are SSRIs?

- Death by overdose is incredibly rare, occurring about two for every one million people using them.

SSRI Side Effects

- Increased anxiety
- Sedation
- Insomnia
- Sexual dysfunction
- Weight gain

Antianxiety Medication

- Benzodiazepines
 - Valium (diazepam)
 - Klonopin (clonazepam)
 - Xanax (alprazolam)
 - Ativan (Lorazepam)

What Do Benzodiazepines Do?

- Acting through the central nervous system
 - Muscle relaxation
 - Sedative
 - Anxiolytic
 - anti convulsant
- Do not repress obsessions in OCD

Benzodiazepine Side Effects

- Significant risk for dependence
- Dangerous overdose risk when mixed with alcohol
- Drowsiness, dizziness, potential for physical and psychological dependence

Antianxiety Medication Mixed with Alcohol and other Drugs

- Dangerous to mix benzodiazepines with alcohol
- Alcohol use with SSRIs may cause dangerously high levels of serotonin
 - “serotonin syndrome”
- Certain drugs may increase the toxicities of SSRIs
 - MDMA, Sudafed, Ambien, LSD
- Some evidence marijuana negatively impacts antianxiety meds

Mood Disorders



Types Of Depression

- Unipolar depression is synonymous with clinical depression and major depressive disorder.

Types Of Depression

- Atypical depression is the most common and typically coexists with an anxiety disorder.
- Dysthymic depression differs from Unipolar depression in that the symptoms are long lasting and milder.

Types of Medications

- Cyclics
- NRIs
- SSRIs
- SNRIs

Antidepressants: Cyclics

- Tofranil (imipramine)
- Elavil (amitriptyline)
- Anafranil (clomipramine)
- Desyrel (trazodone)

Antidepressants: What Do Cyclics Do?

- Cyclics increase effectiveness of both serotonin and norepinephrine
 - Decreased anxiety
 - Decreased anger/aggression
 - Increase positive feelings
 - Increased ability to learn and concentrate

Antidepressants: NRIs

- **Strattera (atomoxetine)**
- **Vestra (reboxetine)**
- **Remeron (mirtazapine)**

Antidepressants: What Do NRIs Do?

- NRIs increase effectiveness of norepinephrine.
 - Provide an energy boost and increase attention span
 - Decrease anxiety
 - Increased positive feelings

Antidepressants: SSRIs

- Prozac (fluoxetine)
- Zoloft (sertraline)
- Paxil (paroxetine)
- Celexa (citalopram)
- Lexapro (escitalopram)
- Luvox (fluvoxamine)

Antidepressants: A Review Of SSRIs

- SSRIs selectively increase effectiveness of serotonin
 - Decreased anxiety
 - Decreased anger/aggression
 - Increased ability to learn and concentrate
- Dangerous to use Alcohol, MDMA, Sudafed, Ambien, LSD and other drugs with SSRIs

Antidepressants: SNRIs

- Cymbalta (duloxetine)
- Effexor (venlafaxine)
- Pristiq (desvenlafaxine)

Antidepressants: What Do SNRIs Do?

- SNRIs increase effectiveness of both serotonin and norepinephrine
 - Decreased anxiety
 - Decreased anger/aggression
 - Increase positive feelings
 - Increased ability to learn and concentrate

Antidepressants: Atypical

- Wellbutrin (bupropion HCL)
- Zyban (bupropion HCL)
- Aplenzin (bupropion hydrobromide)
- Oleptro (trazodone ER)

Antidepressants: What Do Atypicals Do?

- Atypical antidepressants increase effectiveness of both dopamine and norepinephrine
 - Decrease anxiety
 - Increased positive feelings
 - Increased ability to concentrate and learn
 - Increased motivation and desire
 - Increased pleasure

What Do Antidepressants Do?

- **Used to restore normal biological functioning.**
- **Studies suggest that with quality care, the same outcomes may be achieved with a primary care physician as with a psychiatrist.**

Side Effects Of Antidepressants

- Cyclics
 - Dangerous in overdose and enhance effects of alcohol, very sedating, dry mouth, constipation, drop in blood pressure, rapid hear rate, weight gain, decreased libido
- Atypical
 - Anxiety and insomnia

Side Effects Of Antidepressants

- SSRIs
 - Increased serotonin activity, weight gain, decreased libido, anxiety, sedation, insomnia
- NRIs
 - Weight gain, rare decreased white blood cell count (Remeron)

Action Times

- How long does it take for Zoloft, Paxil, Effexor, and Wellbutrin to take effect?
 - At least 50% of those who will eventually respond to the above mentioned antidepressants will begin to demonstrate improvement within one week of beginning treatment.

Antidepressants And AOD

- Weed may increase sedation effects of antidepressants.
- Alcohol may counteract effect of antidepressants.
- Alcohol with antidepressants decreases reaction time, mental cognition, coordination.
- Alcohol and MAOIs may cause dangerous spike in blood pressure.
- MAOIs and meth or MDMA should never be mixed.

Are Certain Ethnicities More Likely To Be Depressed Than Others?

- Apparently so...
- Approximately 30% of Hispanics report suffering from depression compared to 26% for whites, 20% for blacks, and 16% for Asians.

Bipolar Disorder

- Characterized by intense mood swings (mania and depression)
- Disruptive behaviors include delusional thinking, binges, recklessness
- Classified as a mood disorder
- Cyclothymia: mood swings lasting at least two years
 - Chronic disorder with less intense mood swings

Mood-Stabilizing Agents

- Anticonvulsants
 - Depakote (divalproex)
 - Lamictal (lamotrigine)
 - Tegretol (carbamazepine)
 - Topamax (topiramate)

Mood-Stabilizing Agents

- Atypical Antipsychotics
 - Zyprexa (olanzapine)
 - Abilify (aripiprazole)
 - Symbyax (fluoxetine)

Lithium

- Lithium reduces suicide risk and attempts.
- Decreases anxiety and manic episodes.
- Lithium commonly causes nausea, diarrhea, vomiting, thirst, weight gain, acne and fine-hand tremors.
- Lithium may pose long term health risks.

What Do Mood-stabilizing Agents Do?

- The exact way remains unclear, perhaps interaction with GABA
 - Decrease mania
 - Decrease disruptive behaviors
 - Stabilize mood
- Depakote may work quicker than Lithium
 - Decreases rapid cycling mania
 - Decreases rage reactions
- Topamax is more effective in treating migraines than as a mood stabilizer.

Side Effects Of Mood-stabilizing Agents

- Depakote may cause sedation, dizziness, drowsiness, blurred vision, and coordination problems.
- Depakote may pose long term health risks.
- Lamictal may cause serious rash development.

Mood Stabilizing Agents And AOD

- Recreational drugs and alcohol may increase bipolar symptoms and severity.
- CNS and respiratory depressant when used with alcohol.
- Caffeine may cause a severe reaction in patient.
- May increase drowsiness, dizziness, and decreased cognition when paired with lithium.
- Potential for severe reactions.

ADHD

- Rates of ADHD in adults fall in the 4% to 5% range.
- Characterized by difficulty focusing, sitting still and often impulsive tendencies.
- 4-9 times more common in boys.

Medication Management Of ADHD

- Psychostimulants
 - Ritalin (methylphenidate)
 - Dexedrine (dextroamphetamine)
 - Adderall
 - Concerta (methylphenidate)
 - Vyvanse (lisdexamfetamin dimesylate)

Medication Management Of ADHD

- Antidepressants
 - Wellbutrin (bupropion)
- Alpha-2 agonists
 - Catapres (clonidine)
 - Tenex (guanfacine)

What Do ADHD Medications Do?

- Psychostimulants all increase prefrontal cortex levels of norepinephrine and dopamine.
- Psychostimulants have different release times and duration of action times.
- Alpha-2 agonists help control hyperactivity, aggression, and irritability as well as blood pressure.

ADHD And Wellbutrin

- Wellbutrin enhances the actions of norepinephrine and dopamine in the prefrontal cortex.
 - Decrease anxiety
 - Increased positive feelings
 - Increased ability to concentrate and learn
 - Increased motivation and desire
- Wellbutrin carries a possible increased risk for suicide.

Is Wellbutrin Effective In Treating ADHD?

- Yes
 - It is primarily an augmenting agent to psychostimulants which are the mainstay for treating ADHD. Wellbutrin is also effective in treating ADHD with co-morbid depression.

Medication Side Effects

- Psychostimulants may cause insomnia, decrease in appetite, weight loss, and rebound effect.
- Alpha-2 agonists have few side effects. Mild dizziness, headaches, nausea, and depression may occur. Drowsiness is the more common .

Adderall XR vs. Vyvanse

- Is there an advantage to using one over the other?
 - Both provide 10-12 hrs. of coverage. Vyvanse has less risk for abuse intranasally or intravenously since it must be completely absorbed in the GI tract before becoming active.

ADHD Medications And Recreational Drug And Alcohol Use

- Dangerous when used with other stimulants such as meth and cocaine.
- Increased cardiovascular symptoms when used with alcohol.
 - Increased blood pressure and heart rate
- Use of drugs or alcohol with ADHD meds may increase chances for medication abuse.
- Dangerous increase in side effects of recreational drugs and alcohol.

Should Adults Take ADD Drugs?

- Absolutely if there is medical need
 - 70% of those diagnosed with ADD in childhood or adolescents go on to experience symptoms in adulthood. This includes distractibility and inattention throughout their lives.



Psychotic Spectrum Disorders

- Group of disorders including brief psychotic disorder, delusional disorder, schizoaffective disorder, schizophreniform disorder, and schizophrenia.
- High dopamine and low glutamate have been implicated in the development.

Antipsychotics

- Conventional Agents
 - Thorazine (chlorpromazine)
 - Haldol (haloperidol)
 - Navane (thiothixene)
 - Stelazine (trifluoperazine)

Antipsychotics

- **Atypical Agents**
 - Clozaril (clozapine)
 - Risperdal (risperidone)
 - Zyprexa (olanzapine)
 - Seroquel (quetiapine)
 - Geodon (ziprasidone)
 - Abilify (aripiprazole)
 - Invega (paliperidon)

What Do Antipsychotics Do?

- All antipsychotics block dopamine
 - Increase relaxation
 - Less fearful
 - More confident
 - Increased concentration
 - Improved mood
 - Improved sleep patterns

Side Effects Of Antipsychotics

- **Atypical Agents**

- Common side effects include weight gain, sedation, insomnia, agitation, constipation and dry mouth .
- Zyprexa and Clozaril have been linked to both Type II diabetes and worse triglyceride and cholesterol levels.
- Geodon and Abilify have a low risk for diabetes, triglyceride and cholesterol levels.

Psychotropic Medications And Weight Gain

- Many psychiatric medications slow the metabolic rate at which carbohydrates and fats are processed.
- Some medications such as Clozaril and Zyprexa interfere with satiety signals, allowing people to eat and eat with no signal that they are full.