

Pharmacology and mental illness assignment



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Pharmacology is commonly used to deal with mental health disorders. There are benefits and disadvantages in using medications to treat mental health disorders and there is a lot of controversy surrounding this subject. Although pharmacology can be an effective form of treatment for some situations, it is not always the perfect solution for every case. It is important to be informed and educated about all aspects of a medication before beginning one. In order for a medication to be effective it must be the right medication for the person, and the right dosage.

There can also be very harmful side effects from the medication and very harmful interactions. Pharmacology can be a good way to reduce symptoms, but is not a cure, and can be daunting to face the possibility of having to take a pill everyday for the rest of one's life. Psychotropic medications are drugs prescribed to stabilize or improve mood, mental status, or behavior. In other words, they are medications used to modify emotions or behavior. These medications are sometimes called " psychiatric medications" or " psychoactive medications. Psychotropic medications can be grouped or classified in different ways; by chemical structure, how they work in the brain, how they are most commonly used in treatment, or their therapeutic action. Therapeutic action grouping is most commonly used by service providers and families. Common groups are; antidepressants, anti-anxiety, mood stabilizers, and antipsychotics or neuroleptics. Other important groups classified by their action in the brain are; stimulants, beta blockers, and opiate blockers. Antipsychotic Medications are used to treat psychotic disorders, such as schizophrenia.

Some examples are people who are out of touch with reality. They may hear voices, or have strange or untrue ideas. Other symptoms include getting excited or angry for no apparent reason, or spend a lot of time off by ones self, or in bed, sleeping during the day and staying awake at night as well as, neglecting appearance, not bathing or changing clothes, and may become difficult to communicate with saying things that make no sense, or barely talking at all. These medications can reduce psychotic symptoms such as hallucinations.

Mood stabilizers are used for people with manic-depressive illness and help to reduce the mood swings associated with it. They can also be known as anti-manic medications. An example is Bipolar disorder. This has severe highs (manic) and lows (depression). When someone is in a manic swing, they may be overactive, over talkative, and have a lot of energy. They often can make irrational decisions. Depression will show in a " low" mood, lack of energy, changes in eating and sleeping patterns, feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, sadness, worthlessness, and guilt, and sometimes thoughts of suicide.

Lithium is the medication used most often to deal with the mood swings. Lithium evens out mood swings in both directions, so it is also used as an ongoing treatment of bipolar disorder. It can reduce the symptoms in about 5 to 14 days but it can take months for the condition to be under control. Antipsychotic medications can be used in the first days of treatment to control some symptoms until the lithium takes effect. For some people they may only have one episode of bipolar disorder, or be symptom free for

several years, for others it can be a continuing cycle, and continuing lithium is a consideration.

Antidepressants are used for people who are depressed. Everyone can feel sad from time to time, but in order for a person to have the kind of depression that can benefit from medication, it needs to be a prolonged condition, lasting two or more weeks, and it has to interfere with the person's ability to complete daily tasks, and enjoy activities that they at one time enjoyed. They can also have trouble eating, lose weight, or eat more and gain weight, sleep too much or too little, feel guilty, worthless, or hopeless, lack energy, or feel agitated, people who are depressed can have different symptoms depending on the person.

Antidepressants are also used for disorders characterized principally by anxiety. They can block the symptoms of panic, including rapid heartbeat, terror, dizziness, chest pains, nausea, and breathing problems. They can also be used to treat some phobias. The antidepressant is prescribed based on the patient's individual symptoms. It can take 1 to 3 weeks, and sometimes longer before improvement begins to show. After 6 weeks if there is no change in symptoms, a different medication can be tried. Some people will respond to some medications better than others. Depending on the person, medication can be used for a year and then reduced over time to not taking it anymore, or continue taking it for longer periods of time. Dosage of antidepressants varies, depending on the type of drug, the person's body chemistry, age, and, sometimes, body weight. Dosages are generally started low and raised gradually over time until the symptoms decrease. Antianxiety medications are used for people who have anxiety that is unmanageable.

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Everyone can experience anxiety at one time in their life, whether they have “butterflies in the stomach” before a date or giving a speech, or sweaty palms during a job interview.

Other symptoms include: irritability, uneasiness, jumpiness, feelings of apprehension, rapid or irregular heartbeat, stomach ache, nausea, faintness, and breathing problems. A high level of anxiety can be incapacitating for some people and make daily life difficult. There are different types of anxiety disorders. Generalized anxiety, panic, phobia, obsessive compulsive disorder, and post traumatic stress disorder are all anxiety disorders. Antianxiety medications help to calm and relax the anxious person and remove the symptoms. There are a number of antianxiety medications available.

The preferred medications for most anxiety disorders are the benzodiazepines. In addition to the benzodiazepines, a non-benzodiazepine, buspirone, can be used for generalized anxiety disorders. Antidepressants are also used for panic attacks and some phobias and are often prescribed for these conditions. They are also sometimes used for more generalized forms of anxiety, especially when the person is experiencing depression as well as anxiety. There are many different disadvantages to being prescribed to a psychotropic medication.

The side effect's one can experience from these medications is one disadvantage. Each medication can have different side effects, and just to identify a few of the many: drowsiness, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, weight gain, decrease in sexual ability or interest, irregular menstrual periods in

women, extra sensitivity to sunlight/prone to sunburn, skin rashes, movement difficulty, restlessness, pacing, shuffling walk, sudden new symptoms such as; agitation, anxiety, hostility, panic, restlessness, extreme hyperactivity, and suicidal thinking or behavior, dry mouth, head ches, high cholesterol, constipation, high trio glycerides, fatigue, vomiting, etc. These are just a few easily found but each separate medication will list it's own more commonly known side effects. It is also very important for special consideration in young children, pregnant women, and the elderly when taking a psychotropic medication. It is still being studied the effects psychotropic medications can have on children and their growing bodies. It is important that if a child is prescribed that all care givers, doctors, and guardians watch for side effects.

Children can have a harder time communication and understanding side effects on their bodies like adults can. In pregnant women all medications should be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Psychotropic medications can cause birth defects if taken while pregnant and should still be avoided after birth if breast feeding since the new born could still develop side effects. The elderly are usually prescribed other medications that could interact with psychotropic medications, also the elderly at more at risk to accidentally take too much of a medication, that could be fatal.

Another disadvantage of psychotropic medications are the interactions that can occur. A drug interaction can occur when the effect of a particular drug is altered when it is taken with another drug, or with food, the level of significance of the interaction can be major, moderate, or minor. Common interactions can occur when a person is taking multiple medications. Some <https://assignbuster.com/pharmacology-and-mental-illness-assignment/>

medications can actually interact with each other so that they are not completing what they are prescribed to do. Another interaction is alcohol.

Alcohol can interfere with the metabolism of the medication, and pharmacodynamic interactions, where alcohol can enhance the effects of the medication. Different types of food can also interact with medications, they can effect the absorption rate, this is why different medications are either told be taken on a full or empty stomach. Some medications are just known to interact with certain foods, for example, with some medications you should not eat grapefruit because of the chemicals found in it that can keep medications from working properly. Vitamins can also interact with some medications.

Addiction is a risk associated with prescribed medications, just as much a risk as other drugs and behaviors. Some people believe “ if a doctor prescribed it, it must be safe,” or “ addiction to prescription medications can’t happen if I get my drugs from a doctor,” but these ideas are false. Any drug that is mood-altering can potentially be addictive, even if the doctor prescribed it. Since prescriptions can ease symptoms, sometimes people will take more, and more often. Bodies can build up a tolerance to the drug’s effect and and larger doses are needed to achieve the same results.

On the other hand, another disadvantage is if people are taking the medications properly and begin to feel better. Commonly, people think they are better and don’t need medications anymore, and will therefore stop taking the medication and symptoms will usually reappear. Another disadvantage to being prescribed to psychotropic medications is that blood

tests are required to monitor for certain blood disorders and functioning of the liver, some people only require blood tests every 3 months, although others every 1 to 2 weeks.

Although there are many disadvantages, there are benefits for people that are prescribed to the right medications. For some people, the right medication, and right dose, can significantly improve their quality of life through reducing symptoms of the disorder. Although medication is not a cure, it can significantly reduce symptoms of mental disorders. This can include; reducing to stopping hallucinations, lowering anxiety, and stabilizing mood “ highs,” and “ lows,” among others. Another benefit is that medications are very cost effective.

Therapies can take months, even years, and costs a lot more than a bottle of pills. This is a very controversial issue for those who believe in therapies, and alternative methods than those who promote medications and vice versa. Regardless of the opinions, the client’s best interest must be put first, and whatever treatment will work for the individual. Medications can also increase the effectiveness of other treatments. Many believe that medications in conjunction with alternative therapies can help mental disorders. Medications can help reduce symptoms while therapies can elp with everyday life and support. The two together have been known to help people have a greater quality of life. There is a lot of controversy surrounding psychotropic medications. Due to the cost effectiveness of medications many people believe that people are prescribed medications regardless of possible harmful side effects. Many people also believe that doctors frequently over prescribe these medications without correctly

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diagnosing the patient. Also, pharmaceutical companies have many debatable issues with providing these psychotropic medications.

Many people believe these companies are only after money, therefore clouding the ability to produce medications for the reason to help people. “ The single most profitable industry in the United States, the nine largest pharmaceutical companies generated profits of \$30. 6 billion in 2001. Over the past decade, drug company profits represented an 18. 5% return on revenue, some 5. 6 times greater than the 3. 3% median return of Fortune 500 companies. ” These companies will compete to produce the “ best medications,” or the newer versions, sometimes only changing one variable of their current medication.

In conclusion, psychotropic medications can be used for mental disorders. Therapeutic action grouping is the most commonly used by service providers and families and common groups are; antidepressants, anti-anxiety, mood stabilizers, and antipsychotics or neuroleptics. There are many benefits and disadvantages to psychotropic medications. Benefits of psychotropic medications include; symptom reduction, cost effective, and increasing the effectiveness of other treatments. Disadvantages include; side effects, special considerations in children, pregnant women, and the elderly, the risk of addiction, and possible interactions.

There is a lot of controversy surrounding pharmaceutical companies that provide psychotropic medications, and sometimes doctors, due to the profits these companies take in each year. It is very important to individualize treatment for the patient, for greater quality of life, whether it be

medications, alternative therapies, or a combination of both, regardless of controversy, money, or personal opinions. source: <http://www.mental-health-today.com/rx/medications.htm#intro> <http://npi.ucla.edu/mhdd/INFO/modules/psychotropicmedsoverview.htm>