



Psychiatric medicines: A current perspective

Dr. Prerna Purohit

Associate Professor, Department of Human Development, Mahatma Jyoti Rao Phoole University, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India

Abstract

Sometimes even Psychiatrists can't predict what adverse side effect a subject / patient might experience because it's difficult to understand how exactly drugs work and how it affects behavior of an individual.

Psychotropic drugs are increasingly being exposed as chemical toxins with the power to kill. Psychiatrists claim their drugs save lives, but according to their own studies, psychotropic drugs can double the risk of suicide. And long-term use has been proven to create a lifetime of physical and mental damage, a fact ignored by psychiatrists.

Common and well-documented side effects of psychiatric drugs include mania, psychosis, hallucinations, depersonalization, suicidal ideation, heart attack, stroke and sudden death.

Not only that, but The US Food and Drug Administration admits that probably one to ten percent of all the adverse drug effects are actually reported by patients or physicians.

Keywords: psychiatrists, psychotropic drugs, physical and mental damage

Introduction

Every day, doctors and psychiatrists dole out behavior-modifying medicines for a variety of psychiatric disorders. The disorders range from depression and ADHD (attention deficit hyperactive disorder) to bipolar and anxiety disorders. The sordid story behind how these medications work, how they come to market, and how they interfere with the lives of users is a complicated web. However, the next 12 facts will highlight the devastating story behind psychiatric drugs and how they affect millions of people in the United States alone [1, 2].

- **Medication Can Be Useful.** For example, for those with paralyzing anxiety, medication can "turn the volume down." For those unable to get out of bed in the morning because depression has stolen all motivation, medication can provide a "kick-start." And for those with a severe mental health condition such as schizophrenia, medication can be a necessity for stability and/or safety. Therefore, certain people may benefit from taking psychotropic medication, determined by qualified health care providers on a case-by-case basis. For example, a study funded by the National Institute of Mental Health found that some individuals who were prescribed the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) Paxil for moderate to severe depression experienced, along with an improvement in depressive symptoms, decreases in neuroticism and increases in extroversion, with these personality characteristics changing approximately twice as much in eight weeks as those of most adults do in the course of a lifetime [3, 4, 5].
- **Medication Can Support The Psychotherapy Process.** Similar to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, it is difficult for most people to focus on symptom relief and self-growth when they are in crisis or struggling with

anxiety, depression, or other mental health conditions. In some cases, medication can help to stabilize a person, allowing him or her to progress in psychotherapy. For example, a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association shows that cognitive behavioral therapy combined with targeted medication tends to lead to significant improvement of attention deficit hyperactivity symptoms in adults. Of course, a common outcome of successful psychotherapy is the reduction or elimination of the need for psychotropic and other medications.

Psychiatric Medication for Children

Medication can be an effective part of the treatment for several psychiatric disorders of childhood and adolescence. A doctor's recommendation to use medication often raises many concerns and questions in both the parents and the youngster. The physician who recommends medication should be experienced in treating psychiatric illnesses in children and adolescents. He or she should fully explain the reasons for medication use, what benefits the medication should provide, as well as possible risks, adverse effects and other treatment alternatives.

Psychiatric medication should not be used alone. The use of medication should be based on a comprehensive psychiatric evaluation and be one part of a comprehensive treatment plan [6]. Before recommending any medication, the child and adolescent psychiatrist interviews the youngster and makes a thorough diagnostic evaluation. In some cases, the evaluation may include a physical exam, psychological testing, laboratory tests, other medical tests such as an electrocardiogram (EKG) or electroencephalogram (EEG), and consultation with other medical specialists.

Medications which have beneficial effects may also have side effects, ranging from just annoying to very serious. As each

youngster is different and may have individual reactions to medication, close contact with the treating physician is recommended. Do not stop or change a medication without speaking to the doctor. Psychiatric medication should be used as part of a comprehensive plan of treatment, with ongoing medical assessment and, in most cases, individual and/or family psychotherapy. When prescribed appropriately by a psychiatrist (preferably a child and adolescent psychiatrist), and taken as prescribed, medication may reduce or eliminate troubling symptoms and improve the daily functioning of children and adolescents with psychiatric disorders^[7,8].

Certain Psychiatric Symptoms and Disorders

Medication may be prescribed for psychiatric symptoms and disorders, including, but not limited to:

1. **Bedwetting**-If it persists regularly after age 5 and causes serious problems in low self-esteem and social interaction.
2. **Anxiety** - School refusal, phobias, separation or social fears, generalized anxiety, or posttraumatic stress disorders)-if it keeps the youngster from normal daily activities.
3. **Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)**-Marked by a short attention span, trouble concentrating and restlessness. The child is easily upset and frustrated, often has problems getting along with family and friends, and usually has trouble in school.
4. **Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)** - Recurring obsessions (troublesome and intrusive thoughts) and/or compulsions (repetitive behaviors or rituals such as handwashing, counting, or checking to see if doors are locked) which are often seen as senseless but that interfere with a youngster's daily functioning^[9,10].
5. **Depression** - Lasting feelings of sadness, helplessness, hopelessness, unworthiness, guilt, inability to feel pleasure, a decline in school work and changes in sleeping and eating habits.
6. **Eating Disorder** - Either self-starvation (anorexia nervosa) or binge eating and vomiting (bulimia), or a combination of the two.
7. **Bipolar (Manic-Depressive) Disorder** - Periods of depression alternating with manic periods, which may include irritability, "high" or happy mood, excessive energy, behavior problems, staying up late at night, and grand plans.
8. **Psychosis** - Symptoms include irrational beliefs, paranoia, hallucinations (seeing things or hearing sounds that don't exist) social withdrawal, clinging, strange behavior, extreme stubbornness, persistent rituals, and deterioration of personal habits. Psychosis may be seen in developmental disorders, severe depression, schizoaffective disorder, schizophrenia, and some forms of substance abuse.
9. **Autism** - (or other pervasive developmental disorder such as Asperger's Syndrome)-characterized by severe deficits in social interactions, language, and/or thinking or ability to learn, and usually diagnosed in early childhood.
10. **Severe Aggression** - Which may include assaultiveness, excessive property damage, or prolonged self-abuse, such as head-banging or cutting.

11. Sleep Problems - Symptoms can include insomnia, night terrors, sleep walking, fear of separation, or anxiety^[11, 12, 13].

Other Types of Medications for adults

Learning about your medication options can help you have a more meaningful conversation with your doctor. You also can be more fully involved in taking care of your health. Medications for mental health conditions fall into the following types:

Antipsychotic medications can help reduce or, in some cases, eliminate hearing unwanted voices or having very fearful thoughts. They can promote thinking clearly, staying focused on reality, and feeling organized and calm. They also can help you sleep better and communicate more effectively.

Possible side effects include: drowsiness, upset stomach, increased appetite and weight gain, blurred vision, constipation, dry mouth, dizziness, low blood pressure, restlessness, weakness, shakes and twitches, and muscle stiffness. Rare side effects include seizures and problems controlling internal body temperature.

Antidepressants help reduce such feelings as sadness or depressed mood and anxiety as well as suicidal thoughts. They do not, however, make people "happy" or change their personalities.

Possible side effects include: drowsiness or insomnia, constipation, weight gain, sexual problems, tremors and dry mouth^[14, 15].

Mood stabilizers help reduce or eliminate extremes of high and low moods and related symptoms. They shouldn't keep you from experiencing the normal ups and downs of life, though. These medications are also used to treat depression that lasts for a long time, that goes away but comes back or that isn't treated well enough with an antidepressant alone.

Possible side effects include: stomach problems, drowsiness, weight gain, dizziness, shaking, blurred vision, lack of coordination or confusion.

Tranquilizers and sleeping pills can reduce anxiety and insomnia and help you feel more relaxed. Although some of them are used mostly to help with sleep, they all might cause drowsiness. Usually, these medications are used only briefly because longer use can cause dependency.

These medicines are generally safe when used as prescribed and have relatively few serious side effects. As with any medicine, though, some people may have difficulties. You should call your doctor right away if you experience headaches, slurred speech, confusion, dizziness, nausea or increased nervousness or excitability.

Stimulants and related medicines can have a calming effect and help improve concentration and attention span in both children and adults. They also can improve a person's ability to follow directions and reduce hyperactivity and impulsiveness.

Possible side effects include: trouble falling asleep, decreased appetite and weight loss. Less common side effects can include headaches, stomachaches, irritability, rapid pulse or increased blood pressure. These often go away within a few weeks after ending use or if your health care provider lowers your dose.

Staying Safe

Following Some Basic Guidelines Will Protect Your Health While Taking Medication

- Avoid using street drugs or drinking alcohol while taking psychiatric medications. The combination can be dangerous and even deadly.
- Be careful while driving or using machinery, especially if your medicine makes you sleepy.
- Women who may become pregnant, are pregnant, or are breast-feeding should talk with their doctor about possible special concerns related to medications.
- Stopping medications abruptly may cause you to feel ill - and possibly could even cause a seizure. They should be stopped gradually and according to your doctor's instructions.
- If taking a medicine causes you to feel sick, have a fever, skin reaction or anything else that worries you, contact your doctor or pharmacist as soon as possible.

Psychiatric Medication to Cure Schizophrenia

If you have a loved one with schizophrenia, you want them to get help as quickly as possible. Medication is key, along with other types of care, such as psychotherapy, which is a kind of talk therapy, and social skills training.

- But you have to be sure your family member takes his medication. And that's not always easy. Schizophrenia is a mental disorder that affects how a person acts, thinks, and feels. It can keep him from seeing the world in a normal way, which means he may not want to take his medication.

Schizophrenia Causes Many Symptoms, Including

- Delusions (believing things that aren't true)
- Hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that aren't there)
- Jumbled or confused thinking and speaking
- Odd and random movements like strange posture

Doctors aren't sure exactly what causes schizophrenia. There is no cure. So to treat it, a doctor will prescribe your loved one medications that can help ease his symptoms and prevent them from coming back.

Antipsychotics: Medications That Tame Psychosis

The medications doctors prescribe most often for schizophrenia are called antipsychotics. They ease symptoms such as delusions and hallucinations.

These drugs work on chemicals in the brain such as dopamine and serotonin.

Your loved one will have to take schizophrenia medication his entire life, even if his symptoms get better. He can take antipsychotics as a liquid, a pill, or as an injection.

If you think he might have trouble remembering to take medicine every day, he can try a shot he gets from his doctor once or twice a month called a long-acting injectable antipsychotic medication (LAI). It works just as well as taking a daily pill.

Doctors will choose which medication is best by looking at the following:

- How well it works on his symptoms
- How much it will cost
- Side effects

- How easily he can get it
- How often he has to take it

Types of Antipsychotic Medications

There are two groups of antipsychotics. Doctors call the older group of medications "first-generation," "typical," or "conventional" antipsychotics. Some common ones are:

- Chlorpromazine (Thorazine)
- Fluphenazine (Prolixin)
- Haloperidol (Haldol)
- Perphenazine (Trilafon)
- Thiothixene (Navane)

The newer ones are called "second-generation," or "atypical" antipsychotics. Examples of these medicines include:

- Aripiprazole (Abilify)
- Asenapine (Saphris)
- Olanzapine (Zyprexa)
- Quetiapine (Seroquel)

Exemplifying Life Struggle Indian Beautiful Actress Parveen Babi Suffering From Schizophrenia

In 1976, she was featured on the cover of Time magazine along with the cover story "Asia's frenetic film scene", which was a sardonic look at the Hindi masala movie scene from a westerners' standpoint. In 1989, she gave an interview to a magazine where she says, "Amitabh Bachchan is a super international gangster. He is after my life. His goons kidnapped me and I was kept on an Island where they performed a surgery on me and planted one transmitter/chip/electronic bug right under my ear." Her paranoia about Big B kept getting worse and worse. Then began a long, arduous journey of coping with schizophrenia, all alone. By 1983, Parveen quit acting and went to America. After spending six long years in the US, she finally returned in 1989. It was a different Parveen. She was a shadow of her former self, overweight, diabetic and as paranoid as ever. On 22 January, 2005, the cops arrived when her neighbours reported that she was unresponsive. She didn't answer the door, she had not been picking up the milk and newspapers for three days straight. The police had to break in. It wasn't a pretty sight. Her left foot was infected with gangrene. She hadn't eaten anything for three days, and starved to death. A solitary wheelchair lay beside the bed, abandoned.

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