

We have already looked at some of the commonly used prescription medication (as for panic disorder) and we will look in further detail at the antidepressant medication in the section on treatment of depression.

Class of drug

Benzodiazepines:

- Ativan
- Librium
- Valium
- Serax
- Tranxene
- Xanax

Targeted problem

- GAD
- Panic Disorder
- Insomnia

Mechanism of action

Enhances function of GABA (?inhibitory' neurotransmitter)

Benefits

Fast-acting, often effective within the first week sometimes within the first day of treatment

Drawbacks

Habit-forming; can cause drowsiness; may produce withdrawal symptoms

Class of drug

Beta Blockers:

- Inderal
- Tenormin

Targeted problem

- Anxiety
- Mechanism of action
- Reduces effect of adrenaline
- Benefits
- Reduces physical symptoms: palpitation, sweating, tremor

Drawbacks

Should not be used with asthma, congestive heart failure, diabetes, vascular disease, hyperthyroidism, and angina; lowers blood pressure, slows heart rate

Class of drug

Azaspirones:

- BuSpar

Targeted problem

- GAD

Mechanism of action

Enhances activity of serotonin
Does not potentiate alcohol effects

Drawbacks

Works slowly; cannot switch from benzodiazepines immediately

Class of drug

Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOIs):

- Nardil

Targeted problem

- Panic Disorder

Mechanism of action

Increased concentration of serotonin and noradrenaline in brain

Benefits

Effective for patients not responding to other medicines;

Drawbacks

Strict dietary restrictions and potential drug interactions; low blood pressure, moderate weight gain; reduced sexual response; insomnia 2 - 6 weeks before improvement occurs

Class of drug

Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SRIs):

- Celexa
- Lustral
- Seroxat
- Luvox
- Prozac
- Serzone
- Zoloft

Targeted problem

- Panic Disorder
- GAD

Mechanism of action

Affects the concentration of serotonin

Benefits

Non cardiotoxic; relatively safe in overdose

Drawbacks

Nausea; some cause nervousness/irritability; sexual difficulties; 2 to 6 weeks until improvement occurs

Class of drug

Tricyclic Antidepressants (TCAs):

- Anafranil
- Lentizol
- Prothiaden
- Motival
- Surmontil

- Tofranil
- Gamanil

Targeted problem

- Panic Disorder

Mechanism of action

Regulates serotonin and /or noradrenaline in brain

Benefits

Drawbacks

Dry mouth, constipation, blurry vision, difficulty urinating; dizziness, low blood pressure; moderate weight gain; sexual difficulties; 2 to 6 weeks until improvement occurs

Class of drug

Anticonvulsants:

- Neurontin

Targeted problem

Mechanism of action

Affects GABA

Benefits

Drawbacks

Sedation; may take 2-4 weeks to work

Adapted from Anxiety Disorders Association of America
Anxiety Disorder Medication