Depression in December
assessment & treatment
in people with I/DD

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Overview

- Definition of terms
- Ways to appropriately assess mood
- Treatment strategies and specifics
- Cases & Questions
What is Depression?

- Feeling down, blue, lonely, sad; +/- agitation
- Lack of energy; fatigue all day
- Changes in sleep/appetite (decrease or increase)
  - difficulty falling asleep;
  - early morning awakening;
  - intermittent awakenings; may be accompanied by increased worry dreams
- Loss of interests
What is Depression?

- Situation
- Emotion
- Biochemical/neurochemical
- Thought pattern
- Personality
What to look for

- Change in a person’s behavior, interests, engagement, attentional capacity
- Change in biological rhythms: sleep, appetite, alertness; temperature sensitivities; irritability
- Change in energies: irritability, apathy, disengagement, withdrawn, sad
- Family history; treatment response patterns
The great mimickers

- Thyroid problems
- Systemic medical problems
  - cancer
  - anemia (sometimes due to excess blood loss)
- Drug levels (usually too high)
- Substance abuse (alcohol)
Tx for Depression

- Tincture of time
- Psychotherapy: individual, group, focus group
  - DBT; CBT; psychodynamic; psychoanalysis
- Energetics
- Medications
- ECT
- TMS
Advantages/disadvantages in using medications

- Faster improvement in sleep & mood
  - may reduce concomitant anxiety
- Side effects often tolerable or negligent [SSRI]
- Some meds cause major side effects: sedation, low BP, constipation, confusion, dry mouth [TCA]
  - Serum levels should be checked; monitor EKG
Tools for Tx of Depression

* ECT: old, established; unsure of mechanism; highly effective; short term memory confusion; maintenance required for severe recurrent depression; bilateral / unilateral

* TMS: more recent; many magnetic stimuli to a focal area of cortex (not yet covered by most insurances); may require maintenance
Amelia is a 43 yo Hispanic woman with ID documented since age 3yrs. She is the youngest of four children. She has lived in a group home for the past 15 years, with three moves — the most recent two years ago. She works in a shrink-wrapping job (supported employment), attends weekly social events, participates in SO bowling and golf. For past 3 weeks she complains of headaches, poor sleep, food tasting no good, and has wanted to call in sick to work five times. Her maternal aunt (guardian) reveals a family history of recurrent depression in mat GM, distant cousins, and probably her mother who died of ovarian cancer six years ago at age 61.

What questions do you have?…
Other cases?...

* Thank you for your attention and participation!!