ASSESSING ABNORMAL BEHAVIORS
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Pharmacologic Supports of Brain Activities in Persons with I/DD
OVERVIEW

• Contextual factors
• Importance of observations
• Choice of determining abnormal-ness
• Impact of labeling or naming
• Activities and observations
• Identification of where the problem lies
CONTEXT!

- Quality of Life
- Wellness
- Relationships
Context...

• Coping

• Symptom Management
Observe – what do you see?

• Systematic method
• There are many ways to do this.

• Observer bias
  • Are you expecting a “problem”?
  • Avoid: always and never...

• Counter-transference
AB-normal?...

• Normal for whom?

• Cultural context

• Adaptation

• Impairment of function

• Dangerousness
Labels

• What is the purpose?

• Is there connection with the individual?

• We all have human behavior.
Typical Activities

J: problem-solving
decision making

O: hallucinations
delusions

M²: short/long term
forgetful

A₂: nervousness
handle stress/stimulation

C: attention span,
learning capacity/style-cues, prompts

C: communication-nature, content, quantity

S: Sleep, awake, snore/apnea
nightmares
eating-preferences, routines,
weight

erase
Whose problem...

• Safety concerns
• Noise and disruption
  – standards within the current living context
• Uncovering bias in caregivers and providers
• Challenging the habit of learned behavior
  – individual with I/DD and provider.
Mental Health Concerns

- Wellness
- Relationships
- Coping
- Symptom Management
- Mind
  - Body
  - Spirit
- Personal
  - Professional
- Quality of Life
- Triggers Repertoire
- Medication
  - Unique Intervention

Coping Triggers Repertoire
Principles of Behavioral Monitoring

• Shared decision making
• Defined target symptoms
• Objective measurement procedures
  • Frequency counts
  • Time samples
  • Rating scales
• Other clinical indicators
  • Staff responses
  • Performance information
  • Increased attention
  • Increased concentration
• Defined outcome criteria
• Multi-setting data collection
Saboteurs of Effective Monitoring

• Monitoring is seen as a burden
• Crisis response and band aids
• Monitoring system is too complicated
• Data is not organized or analyzed
Let’s explore further...
GOOD & BAD USES OF PRESCRIBED MEDICATIONS
OVERVIEW

• Valid uses of medications
• Poor use of medications
• Link symptoms and medication
• Classes of psychotropic medications

Side effects
  • Uncomfortable
  • Potentially lethal
Reasonable use of meds
- Safety
- Improved functioning
- Ameliorate symptoms
- Treat a specific disorder
- Prevent decline in functioning
- Adjunctive therapy
  - Prior to specific procedures
Poor Choices to Use Meds

- Convenience
  - Whose definition of convenience
- Restraint
  - Issues of respect, choice
- Safety documentation
- Lack of review
  - The need for medication should be documented
- Adding on blindly
General Considerations

• All medications have intended and unintended effects.
• Everyone reacts uniquely to medication.
• There are general responses to expect ~
  • The more medication an individual takes, the more likely interactions will occur.
• Concurrent medical conditions will affect medication effects.
General Considerations

- Factors affecting efficacy:
  - Potency,
  - Bioavailability,
  - Compliance,
  - Onset of action,
  - Duration of action.
Physician/Professional Evaluation Steps

• Establish and maintain safety and trust

• Identify reliable, available, varied sources of information

• Clarify purpose-presenting questions and problems
  • Extent of distress, discomfort

• Learn specific behavioral/symptom changes

• Direct contact and observation
  • rhythms of movement -- communication
  • personal space -- emotional expression
  • desire for intimacy -- trust and comfort
Link Sx ↔ Meds

• Accuracy of assessment

• Determine competence

• Off-label uses of medications
Bioavailability

**Pharmacokinetics** - what the body does with the drug.
- Absorption
- Distribution
- Metabolism
- Elimination

**Pharmacodynamics** - what the drug does in/to the body.
- Mechanism of action
- Individual response
- Onset
- Therapeutic vs. toxic
## Indications to Use Psychotropic Medications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnostic indication</th>
<th>Neuroleptic (Anti-psychotic)</th>
<th>Anti-depressant</th>
<th>Mood Stabilizer</th>
<th>Anti-anxiety</th>
<th>Stimulant</th>
<th>Anti-Parkinson's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Psychosis, Schizoaffective Disorder, Delusional Disorder, Atypical psychosis</td>
<td>Depressive Disorders, Anxiety disorders</td>
<td>Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Schizoaffective disorder</td>
<td>Anxiety Disorders, (OCD, PTSD, Panic, Generalized)</td>
<td>Attention Disorders</td>
<td>Extrapyramidal effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other:</td>
<td>Conditions and symptoms...</td>
<td>...may not be FDA approved...</td>
<td>...but may...</td>
<td>...be clinically...</td>
<td>...warranted.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medication Classes

- Anxiolytic: cut through anxiety...
  - Benzodiazepine
  - Buspirone
  - Tricyclics
  - Beta-blockers
  - SSRI’
  - SNRI
Antidepressants

- Tricyclics (three-ring compounds)
- SSRI (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor)
- SNRI (serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitor)
- MAOI (monoamine oxidase inhibitor)
Antipsychotics

• Typical
  • “neuroleptic”
  • Based on animal model of motor stiffness

• Atypical
  • Lower risk of involuntary movements
  • Metabolic syndrome
Mood Stabilizers
• Lithium: the gold standard

Anti-Epileptic Drugs
• Tegretol (carbamazepine)
• Lamictal (lamotrigine)
• Depakote (valproic acid)
• Neurontin (gabapentin) – less effective

Calcium-channel blocker
• Calan (verapamil)
Sedative-Hypnotics

- Sleep aides
  - Restoril; Lunesta; Ambien
  - Benzodiazepines
  - Trazodone

- Antihistamine
  - Benadryl
  - Atarax
Pain-relief

• Non-pharmacologic
• Gabapentin
• Lyrica
• Ibuprofen
Symptoms of **MEDICALLY DANGEROUS** Effects

- Acute Renal Failure
- Anaphylaxis
- Grand Mal Seizures (or Convulsions)
- Status epilepticus
- Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome
- Pancreatitis
- QT Prolongation
- Rhabdomyolysis
- Serotonin Syndrome
- Thrombocytopenia
Side Effects

- Polypharmacy
- Drug-drug interactions
- Masked toxicity
- Enhanced or slowed metabolism

Acute dystonia
- Sustained; painful; interferes with function
- May involve any muscle group
- Tx: BZD quickly; benadryl
Side Effects

• Akathisia
  • Internal restlessness.
  • Acute or delayed onset (Tardive Akathisia).
  • May be interpreted as agitation.
  • Generally reversible: stop the medication, supportive measures, BZDs.
Side Effects

• NMS (neuroleptic malignant syndrome)
• Dehydration
• Confusion/delerium
• Increased temperature
• Muscle breakdown

• Potentially fatal !!!
Side Effects

• Tardive Dyskinesia
  • Slow onset
  • Involuntary movement; should fall asleep
  • Fast contraction followed by relaxation
• Repeated rating scale(s)
  • AIMS
  • DISCUS
  • SIMAS
Almost time for a break...

- Questions?
- Comments?
You mean there’s more?!!?
Cases

• Stepwise diagnostic determination.
• Simply relying on “behavior” is a great way to get into trouble!
Symptoms of **MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL** Effects

- Dreaming (Abnormal)
- Emotional Lability
- Excitability
- Feeling Unreal
- Forgetfulness
- Irritability
- Jitteriness
- Lethargy

- Libido changes
- Panic Reaction
- Somnolence
- Thoughts and actions related to self harm
- Tremulousness
- Yawning
- Food cravings
Symptoms of **MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL** Effects

- Aggravated Nervousness
- Agitation
- Amnesia
- Anxiety Attack
- Apathy
- Decreased Appetite
- Increased Appetite
- Auditory Hallucination

- Bruxism
- Carbohydrate Craving
- Concentration Impaired
- Confusion
- Crying (abnormal)
- Depersonalization
- Depressive mood
- Disorientation
Symptoms of **CARDIOVASCULAR** Effects

- Palpitation
- Hypertension
- Bradycardia
- Tachycardia
- ECG Abnormal Flushing
- Varicose Veins
Symptoms of **GASTROINTESTINAL** Effects

- Abdominal Cramp/Pain
- Belching
- Bloating
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Dyspepsia/Indigestion
- Flatulence
- Gagging
- Gastritis
- Gastroenteritis
- Gastrointestinal Hemorrhage

- Gastro Esophageal Reflux - GERD
- Heartburn
- Hemorrhoids
- Increased Stool Frequency
- Indigestion
- Nausea
- Swallowing Difficulty
- Vomiting
Symptoms of *Eyes, Ears, and Mouth* Effects

- Conjunctivitis
- Dry Eyes
- Abnormal Vision
- Blurred Vision
- Eye Irritation
- Pupils Dilated

- Toothache
- Bruxism
- Taste Alteration
  - Metallic taste
- Tinnitus
- Earache
Symptoms of **SKIN** Effects

- Acne
- Alopecia
- Angioedema
- Dermatitis
- Dry Lips
- Dry Skin
- Folliculitis
- Furunculosis
- Pruritus
- Rash
- Epidermal Necrolysis
Symptoms of **GENERAL BODY Effects**

- Dry Mouth
- Sweating Increased
- Allergy
- Asthenia
- Chest Pains
- Chills
- Edema of Extremities
- Falls
- Fatigue

- Fever
- Hot Flashes
- Influenza (Flu)-like Symptoms
- Leg Pain
- Malaise
- Pain in Limb
- Syncope
- Tightness of Chest
Symptoms of **UROGENITAL** Effects

- Blood in Urine (hematuria)
- Pain on urination (dysuria)
- Urinary Frequency
- Urinary Urgency
- Anorgasmia (male and female)
- Ejaculation Disorder
- Menstrual Disorder
- Kidney Stone (nephrolithiasis)
Symptoms of *UROGENITAL* Effects (Women)

- Menorrhagia
- Menstrual Cramps
- Menstrual Disorder
- Pelvic Inflammation
- Premenstrual Syndrome
- Spotting Between Menses
- Pregnancy
Symptoms of RESPIRATORY SYSTEM Effects

- Asthma
- Shortness of breath
- Coughing
- Laryngitis
- Nasal Congestion
- Rhinitis
- Sinus Congestion
- Sinus Headache
Symptoms of **NERVOUS SYSTEM** Effects

- Coordination Abnormal
- Dizziness
- Vertigo
- Disequilibrium
- Headache
- Migraine
- Paresthesia
- Sluggishness

- Involuntary muscle Contractions
- Increased muscular tone
- Restlessness
- Tics
- Tremor/shaking
- Twitching
Symptoms of **HEMATOPOEITIC** Effects

- Anemia (RBCs)
- Granulocytopenia (WBCs)
- Thrombocytopenia (platelets)
- Bruises
- Nosebleeds
Symptoms of **METABOLIC & NUTRITIONAL** Effects

- Arthralgia
- Arthropathy
- Arthritis
- Back Discomfort
- Gout
- Hepatic Enzymes Increased
- Bilirubin Increased
- Hypercholesterolemia
- Increased Weight
- Decreased Weight
- Muscle Cramp
- Muscle Stiffness
- Muscle Weakness
- Myalgia (ache)
- Thirst
- Thyroid changes
- Hyperglycemia
Symptoms of SKELETAL Effects

• Torticollis
• Osteopenia
• Dystonia
• Jaw pain
• Jaw stiffness
• Joint stiffness
INTEGRATION OF MEDICATIONS, BEHAVIOR, AND ENVIRONMENT(S)
Integration

• Holistic
  • Whole person; whole environment

• Multiple etiologies in same person
  • Agitation: medication, worry, vulnerability, shortness of breath, dementia (some examples)

• Emotional triggers
  • Anxiety; anticipation
Information Before Health Consult

- Personal information
- Reason for seeking consultation
  - presenting problem(s)
- Concise history
  - social
  - family
- Medical status
  - diagnostic history
- Medication history and response
- Behavior, symptom baselines
  - data based!
Questions During Health Consult

- Are target signs and symptoms consistent with diagnosis?
- What is the rationale for selected medication/treatment intervention?
- What are the expected benefits?
- What are the potential consequences - with and without use of this treatment?
- When should the effect of the medication/treatment intervention become apparent?
- Does the physician suggest complementary support/treatment?
- How often does the physician want updates or to see person?
Obstacles to Effective Treatment

• Intellectual ability and self reporting
• Baseline exaggeration
• Paradoxical changes
• Complex, multi-determinate nature of behavior
• Physician attitudes and assumptions

Sovner and Hurley
The Four Questions +

Michael Smull

• What have we tried?
• What have we learned?
• What are we pleased with?
• What are we concerned with?

The fifth question and its questions:

• Now what?
  • what will we continue to do?
  • what will we do less of or stop doing?
  • what will we begin or return to doing?
Differentiating *Mental* Illness from *Behavioral* Issues

- Medications and psychotherapy (attentive intention) change brain physiology and neuronal patterns.
- All mind-brain experiences are expressed through behavior and communication.
Overall: Strive for BEST Outcomes

- Is quality of life
  - Improved?
  - Sustained?

- Are there other “things” that could be done?
  - Activities
  - Attitudes
  - Opportunities
“... it takes a community”
Thank you for your attention and participation
Evaluations

- Please fill out your evaluations... for CEUs and to provide feedback