

Learning Activity 4.1.

Psychotropic Medication Quiz

1. What is the mechanism of action by which antidepressant medications achieve the desired effect (regardless of the different physiological processes by which this action is accomplished)?

The increased concentration of norepinephrine, serotonin, and/or dopamine in the body either by blocking their reuptake by the neurons or by inhibiting the release of monoamine oxidase inhibitors.

2. For what must the nurse be on the alert with the client who is receiving antidepressant medication?

Suicidal ideation, side effects, serotonin syndrome.

3. As the nurse, when would you expect the client to begin showing signs of symptomatic relief after the initiation of antidepressant therapy?

4 weeks

4. Name an example of a tricyclic antidepressant _____ Amitriptyline _____.

Name an example of an MAOI _____ Phenzelzine _____.

Name an example of an SSRI _____ Fluoxetine _____.

5. Describe some common side effects and nursing implications for tricyclic antidepressants.

Common side effects are blurred vision, constipation, urinary retention, orthostatic hypotension, tachycardia, arrhythmias, weight gain, and photosensitivity. Some nursing implications are to monitor for suicidal ideation and blood pressure, encourage fluids, monitor for all the side effects mentioned before.

6. _____ Hypertensive crisis _____ is the most potentially life-threatening adverse effect of

MAOIs. Symptoms for which the nurse and client must be on the alert include: _____ severe

headache_____

_____hypertension_____. What must be done to prevent these symptoms from occurring? (Your answer must include some examples.)

To prevent these symptoms from occurring you want to avoid foods with high tyramine. For example, chocolate, aged cheeses, and wine.

7. Lithium carbonate is commonly prescribed for ___bipolar disorder_____. Many times when these individuals are started on lithium therapy, the physician also orders an antipsychotic medication. Why might he or she do so?

He or she would do that because lithium could cause delusions, on its own, in patients.

8. There is a narrow margin between the therapeutic and toxic serum levels of lithium carbonate. What is the therapeutic range? List the initial signs and symptoms of lithium toxicity.

The therapeutic levels are 1.0-1.5. The initial signs and symptoms are N/V, severe diarrhea, tremors, blurred vision, and tinnitus.

9. Describe some nursing implications for the client on lithium therapy.

Monitor lithium levels on a regular basis. Educate about symptoms of lithium toxicity. Educate on adequate fluid/nutrition intake.

10. What is the mechanism of action for anxiolytics (with the exception of buspirone)?

The mechanism of action is to increase the affinity of GABA and block reuptake of serotonin.

11. What is the most commonly used group of anxiolytics? Give two examples.

Benzodiazepines: Lorazepam and Diazepam

Antihistamines: Hydroxyzine

12. What are the most common side effects of anxiolytics?

Drowsiness, tolerance and dependence on the drug.

13. What must the client on long-term anxiolytic therapy be instructed in order to prevent a potentially life-threatening situation?

To monitor for signs and symptoms of dyscrasia, which is a disease/disorder of the blood. Bleeding and fever are common signs to look for.

14. What is thought to be the mechanism of action that produces the desired effect with antipsychotic medications?

The action is blocking postsynaptic dopamine receptors.

15. Phenothiazines are an example of a “typical” antipsychotic group. Give two examples of phenothiazines and two examples of the newer “atypical” antipsychotics.

Typical: chlorpromazine and haloperidol

Atypical: risperidone and olanzapine

16. Describe potential adverse hormonal effects associated with antipsychotic therapy.

Decreased libido, gynecomastia, and retrograde ejaculation.

17. Agranulocytosis is a potentially very serious side effect of antipsychotic therapy. The nurse and client should be on the alert for symptoms of ____fever_____, _____malaise_____, and _____decreased white blood cell count_____.

18. Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS) is a rare but potentially fatal side effect of antipsychotic drugs.

List symptoms for which the nurse must be on the alert when assessing for NMS.

High fever, altered mental status, hypotension/hypertension, rigidity, and coma.

19. Describe the symptoms of extrapyramidal side effects associated with antipsychotic therapy.

Involuntary facial movements, muscles contracting involuntarily, involuntary rolling of the eyes, feeling of restlessness (akathisia).

20. What is the classification of medication that is commonly prescribed for drug-induced extrapyramidal reactions? Give two examples of these medications.

Antiparkinsonian agents: Benztropine and trihexyphenidyl

21. Describe a potentially life-threatening situation that could occur in the client who abruptly withdraws from long-term use of CNS stimulants.

It could result in suicidal ideation.

Homework Assignment Questions and Answers

Please read the chapter and answer the following questions:

1. Identify three priority safety concerns for each class of psychotropic medications.

Antianxiety Agents

Abrupt withdrawal can be life-threatening, may aggravate symptoms of depression, and drowsiness/confusion/lethargy.

Antipsychotics (novel)

Extrapyramidal side effects, hypotension, hyperglycemia/diabetes/weight gain.

Antipsychotics (phenothiazines and haloperidol)

Akathisia, dystonia, parkinsonism

MAO Inhibitors

Hypertensive crisis, suicidal ideation, serotonin syndrome

SSNRIs

Overdose – seizures, arrhythmias, suicidal ideation

SSRIs

Drowsiness/blurred vision, serotonin syndrome, bleeding

Tricyclic antidepressants

Postural hypotension, higher risk of drug overdoses, arrhythmias.

2. Differentiate primary actions and side effects for traditional versus atypical antipsychotics.

Traditional's primary action is the reduction of dopamine while atypical's action is a reduction of serotonin. Traditional's side effects are extrapyramidal, while atypical's is diabetes and weight gain.

3. Differentiate primary actions and side effects for tricyclic versus SSRI antidepressants.

Tricyclic has a primary action on norepinephrine, while some side effects are orthostatic hypotension

and dry mouth. SSRI has a primary action to reduce the reuptake of serotonin in the CNS, while some side effects are sexual dysfunction and suicidal ideation.