
Anxiety

Modern Problems of Pharmacopsychiatry

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Drug Dosage

The authors and publisher have exerted every effort to ensure that drug selection and dosage set forth in this text are in accord with current recommendations and practice at the time of publication. However, in view of ongoing research, changes in government regulations, and the constant flow of information relating to drug therapy and drug reactions, the reader is urged to check the package insert for each drug for any change in indications and dosage and for added warnings and precautions. This is particularly important when the recommended agent is a new and/or infrequently employed drug.

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Introduction

The purpose of this book is to present a comprehensive picture of the current thinking of our research group about the nature and treatment of anxiety disorders. It is often not recognized that the past 10 years have seen the development of a substantial body of new knowledge with regard to anxiety disorders. This new knowledge has not yet come to the attention to the general public. Unfortunately, these advances have not yet become part of the working armamentarium of many clinicians and researchers.

The development of this new knowledge has been sparked largely by the recognition that anxiety disorders differ from each other and have specific response patterns to different therapeutic interventions, including both medication and psychotherapy.

As yet there is a substantial gulf between those who espouse psychogenic causation and psychotherapy and those who approach the issues from the point of view of biological causation and biological treatment such as medication. We are currently in the process of attempting to understand the various anxiety disorders in their full complexity, which admits of the interaction of biological and psychological components and often requires integrative treatment for the best results.

Our book starts by focusing on the role of spontaneous panic attack in the pathogenesis of certain specific psychopathological states. We point out that the panic attack is a difficult concept to incorporate within the two leading psychogenic schools of psychopathology; the psychoanalytic and the behavioral learning school. Further, the effectiveness of antidepressant medication in the treatment of the spontaneous panic attack, but not in the treatment of anticipatory anxiety, calls for a reconceptualization of

our views. It is likely that several different processes have been lumped together under the term anxiety.

At the Anxiety Disorders Clinic (New York State Psychiatric Institute) of the Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, Department of Psychiatry, we are engaged in the broad ranging study of the various anxiety disorders from the point of view of treatment, physiology, and genetics. My colleagues Abby Fyer, MD, Jack Gorman, MD and Michael Liebowitz, MD present their detailed reviews of the latest information on panic disorders, agoraphobia, generalized anxiety disorder, social phobia and simple phobia. These reviews are enlivened by their own scientific contributions and contains much that is novel and fruitful.