

Anti-depressant Drugs

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1. Selective serotonin re-uptake inhibitors (**SSRIs**)
2. Serotonin/norepinephrine re-uptake inhibitors (**SNRIs**)
3. Atypical antidepressants
4. Tricyclic antidepressants (**TCAs**)
5. Monoamine oxidase inhibitors (**MAOs**)

MECHANISM OF ANTIDEPRESSANT DRUGS

- Most clinically useful antidepressant drugs potentiate, either **directly or indirectly**, the actions of **norepinephrine and/or serotonin in the brain**
- **Amine theory**, which proposes that depression is due to a **deficiency of monoamines**, such as **norepinephrine & serotonin**, at certain key sites in the brain

I. SELECTIVE SEROTONIN REUPTAKE INHIBITORS

- Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (**SSRIs**) are a group of antidepressant drugs that **specifically inhibit serotonin reuptake**
- **Tricyclic antidepressants** that nonselectively **inhibit the uptake of norepinephrine and serotonin**

- **SSRIs** have **little blocking activity** at **muscarinic, α -adrenergic, and histaminic H₁ receptors**
- Therefore, common side effects associated with **tricyclic antidepressants**, such as orthostatic hypotension, sedation, dry mouth, and blurred vision, **are not commonly seen with the SSRIs**
- Because they have **fewer adverse effects** and are relatively **safe even in overdose**, SSRIs have largely **replaced tricyclic antidepressants and monoamine oxidase inhibitors** as the drugs of choice in treating
6 depression

Include:

1. **fluoxetine,**
2. **citalopram,**
3. **escitalopram,**
4. **fluvoxamine,**
5. **paroxetine, and**
6. **sertraline**

- **SSRIs block reuptake of serotonin**, leading to increased concentrations of neurotransmitter in synaptic cleft and, ultimately, to greater postsynaptic neuronal activity

- Antidepressants, including SSRIs, typically take at least **2 weeks to produce significant improvement in mood**, and **maximum benefit may require up to 12 weeks or more**

- Approximately **40%** of depressed patients treated with adequate doses for **4 to 8 weeks do not respond** to the antidepressant agent
- Patients that do not respond to one antidepressant **may respond to another**
- Approximately **80% or more** will respond to at least one antidepressant drug
- These drugs **do not usually produce** central nervous system (CNS) stimulation or mood elevation **in normal individuals**

- 1. Depression**
- 2. Obsessive-compulsory disorders (OCDs)**
- 3. Panic disorders**
- 4. Generalized anxiety disorders**
- 5. Posttraumatic stress disorders**

- All of the SSRIs are well absorbed after **oral** administration
- **Peak levels** are seen in approximately **2-8 hours**
- The majority of SSRIs have **plasma half-lives** that range between **16-36 hours**
- **Metabolism** by **P450 enzymes** & glucuronide or sulfate conjugation

- **Sleep disturbances:** sedation, insomnia
- **Sexual dysfunction:** Loss of libido, delayed ejaculation & anorgasmia
- **Use in children and teenagers:** suicidal thinking
- **Overdoses:** seizures

2 .Serotonin/norepinephrine re-uptake inhibitors (SNRIs)

- **Venlafaxine and duloxetine**
- Inhibit re-uptake of both serotonin & norepinephrine
- Effective in depressed patients in which SSRIs are ineffective
- Effective in treating **chronic painful symptoms** accompanied by depression (backache, muscle aches) & **neuropathic pain (e.g. diabetic peripheral neuropathy)**
- SNRIs have no activity at adrenergic, muscarinic or histamine receptors

3. ATYPICAL ANTIDEPRESSANTS

➤ The atypical antidepressants are a mixed group of agents that have actions at several different sites

Include

1. bupropion,
2. mirtazapine,
3. nefazodone, and
4. trazodone

4. TRICYCLIC ANTIDEPRESSANTS

➤ Tricyclic antidepressants (TCAs) block norepinephrine and serotonin reuptake into the neuron

The TCAs include the

I. tertiary amines:

imipramine (the prototype drug),

amitriptyline,

clomipramine,

doxepin

2. Secondary amines:

- **desipramine**
- **nortriptyline**

➤ **All have similar therapeutic efficacy & choice of drug may depend on:**

- patient tolerance to side effects prior response
- pre-existing medical conditions
- duration of action

1. Inhibition of neurotransmitter reuptake:

- **TCA**s potent inhibitors of neuronal reuptake of norepinephrine & serotonin into presynaptic nerve terminals
- They cause **increased concentrations of monoamines** in synaptic cleft, resulting in antidepressant effects

2. Blocking of receptors:

- TCAs also block **α -adrenergic, histaminic, and muscarinic receptors**

Actions:

- ❖ **TCA's elevate mood, improve mental alertness, increase physical activity in patients with major depression**
- ❖ **Panic disorders**

- TCAs are effective in treating **moderate to severe major depression**
- **Imipramine** has been used **to control bed-wetting in children (enuresis, incontinence)** (older than 6 years) by causing contraction of internal sphincter of bladder
- TCAs, particularly **amitriptyline**, have been used to treat **migraine headache** and **chronic pain syndromes** (for example, **“neuropathic” pain**) in a number of conditions for which the cause of pain is unclear

- Tricyclic antidepressants are well absorbed after **oral administration**
- Because of their **lipophilic nature**, they are widely distributed & **readily penetrate into CNS**
- **Have a narrow therapeutic index**

- **Blockade of muscarinic receptors** leads to blurred vision, xerostomia (dry mouth), urinary retention, constipation)
- **TCA's block α -adrenergic receptors**, causing orthostatic hypotension, dizziness, and reflex tachycardia (most serious in elderly)
- Overdose **life-threatening arrhythmias**
- **Sedation** due to block of **histamine H1 receptors**
- Weight gain
- **Sexual dysfunction:** (erectile dysfunction in men and anorgasmia in women)

5. MONOAMINE OXIDASE INHIBITORS

- **Monoamine oxidase (MAO)** is mitochondrial enzyme found in **nerve, gut & liver**
- In neuron, **MAO catalyses oxidative deamination & inactivation of excess neurotransmitters** (norepinephrine, dopamine, and serotonin) that leak out of synaptic vesicles

- **MAO inhibitors inactivate MAO enzyme**, permitting neurotransmitters to escape degradation and to accumulate within presynaptic neuron & leak into synaptic space

- This cause **activation of norepinephrine and serotonin receptors**, and is responsible for indirect antidepressant action of these drugs

➤ Three MAO inhibitors are currently available for treatment of depression:

1. **phenelzine,**
2. **tranylcypromine** and
3. **selegiline** (was first-approved for Parkinson's disease), but is now also approved for depression, is the first antidepressant available in a **transdermal delivery system**

- Most MAO inhibitors, such as phenelzine, form stable complexes with the enzyme, causing **irreversible inactivation**
- This results in **increased stores of norepinephrine, serotonin & dopamine** within the neuron and subsequent diffusion of excess neurotransmitter into synaptic space

- These drugs inhibit not only MAO in brain but also **MAO in liver and gut that catalyze oxidative deamination of drugs and potentially toxic substances**, such as **tyramine**, which is found in certain foods

- **MAO inhibitors** therefore show **high incidence of drug-drug and drug-food interactions**

Therapeutic uses

MAO inhibitors are indicated for depressed patients who are **unresponsive or allergic to TCAs** or who **experience strong anxiety**

- Severe and often unpredictable side effects due to **drug-food and drug-drug interactions** limit the widespread use of MAO inhibitors
- **Tyramine**, which is contained in certain foods, such as aged cheeses and meats, chicken liver, pickled or smoked fish ,red wines, is normally inactivated by MAO in gut

- Individuals receiving MAO inhibitor are unable to degrade tyramine
- **Tyramine causes release of large amounts of stored catecholamines** from nerve terminals, resulting in headache, stiff neck, tachycardia, nausea, hypertension, cardiac arrhythmias, seizures & stroke
- Patients must therefore be educated to avoid tyramine-containing foods.

- Drowsiness, orthostatic hypotension, blurred vision, dry mouth, dysuria & constipation
- **MAO inhibitors and SSRIs** should not be co-administered due to risk of life-threatening “**serotonin syndrome**” characterized by hyperthermia, muscle rigidity, myoclonus (clonic muscle twitching), changes in mental status (confusion, agitation)
- Both types of drugs require washout periods of at least 2 weeks before the other type is administered

Thank you