

Anxiolytics, antidepressants, and antipsychotics

- Describe the role of neurotransmitters in mood, emotional and psychiatric disorders.
- Describe the mechanisms of action, indications for use, & major adverse effects of anxiolytics, antidepressants, and antipsychotics.
- Apply the nursing process relating to the administration of anxiolytics, antidepressants, and antipsychotics.

Anti-anxiety agents (anxiolytics)

Benzodiazepines
Buspirone (BuSpar)
Antihistamines
Barbiturates

Abrams Chapter 8

Benzodiazepines

- Schedule IV controlled substances
- Less potential for abuse than barbiturates
- Cause fewer adverse reactions
- Uses: anti-anxiety, anticonvulsant, muscle relaxant, pre-op, hypnotic, alcohol withdrawal
- Examples:
 - diazepam (Valium)
 - lorazepam (Ativan)

Buspirone (BuSpar)

- Unrelated to barbiturates and benzodiazepines
- Use: anti-anxiety
 - slow onset of action
 - not used prn
- Does not cause sedation or physical or psychological dependency
- Not a controlled substance

Mechanism of Action

- Benzodiazepines
 - Bind with receptor sites on nerve cells
 - Cause nerves to be less responsive
 - Enhance inhibitory effects of GABA
- Buspirone
 - Interacts with serotonin and dopamine receptors

Pharmacokinetics

- Benzodiazepines
 - Variable – short and long-acting forms
 - Highly lipid soluble, protein bound
 - Metabolized in liver
- BuSpar
 - Metabolized in liver
 - Requires 1- 2 weeks for clinical response
 - 3 – 4 weeks for optimal response

Dosage and Administration

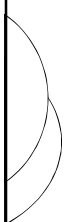
- Benzodiazepines
 - Oral and parenteral forms
 - Dosage varies with clinical indication
 - IV route – hypotension, resp. depression
 - Check IV solution compatibility
- Buspirone
 - Oral

Major Adverse Effects

- Benzodiazepines
 - sedation, impaired coordination, ataxia, physical dependence, hypersensitivity, paradoxical excitation
- Buspirone
 - headache, nausea, dizziness, insomnia

Antihistamines and Barbiturates

- Hydroxyzine (Atarax, Vistaril)
 - Have sedative, antipruritic, and antiemetic effects
 - Used for pre-op sedation, relief of anxiety.
- Barbiturates
 - Used as anticonvulsants, hypnotics, and pre-op
 - Not drugs of choice for anxiety
 - Potential for abuse, respiratory depression



Nursing Implications

- Assess for signs of anxiety, vital signs, drug history, contraindications
- Provide for safety
- Non-drug measures to relieve anxiety
- Observe for drug interactions
- Do not stop benzodiazepines and barbiturates abruptly, taper dose gradually
- Omit dose for excessive sedation
- Rx of benzodiazepine overdose or excessive sedation: flumazenil (Romazicon) IV
