

# Anxiety Disorders

Cindy Boyack, MD, FRCPC

May 14, 2009



# Anxiety Disorders

- + Normal anxiety-vague, sense of apprehension often accompanied by physical symptoms-stomach discomfort, headache, tremor, perspiration, headache, palpitation, chest tightness, etc.
- + Function of anxiety- adaptive- alert or warning of impending danger or adverse situation. Triggers person to take action.

# Anxiety Disorders

- ✦ Very common
  - 30% lifetime prevalence in women
  - 20% lifetime prevalence in men
- ✦ Often present with physical symptoms to primary care



# Physical Symptoms of Anxiety

- ◆ Diarrhea
- ◆ Dizziness
- ◆ Perspiration
- ◆ Hyperreflexia
- ◆ Hypertension
- ◆ Palpitations
- ◆ Restlessness
- ◆ Syncope
- ◆ Tachycardia
- ◆ Tingling in extremities
- ◆ Tremor
- ◆ Upset stomach
- ◆ Urinary frequency, urgency

# Anxiety Disorders

- ✦ Panic Disorder with or without agoraphobia
- ✦ Generalized Anxiety Disorder
- ✦ Social Phobia
- ✦ Obsessive Compulsive Disorder



# Anxiety Disorders

- ✦ Specific Phobia

- ✦ Acute Stress Disorder

- ✦ Post Traumatic Stress Disorder



# Anxiety Disorders

- ✦ Anxiety due to General Medical Condition

- ✦ Anxiety due to substances



# GAD-7 Screening Tool

## Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-item (GAD-7) scale

Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?	Not at all sure	Several days	Over half the days	Nearly every day
1. Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge	0	1	2	3
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying	0	1	2	3
3. Worrying too much about different things	0	1	2	3
4. Trouble relaxing	0	1	2	3
5. Being so restless that it's hard to sit still	0	1	2	3
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable	0	1	2	3
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen	0	1	2	3
<i>Add the score for each column</i>	+	+	+	
<b>Total Score (add your column scores) =</b>				

If you checked off any problems, how difficult have these made it for you to do your work, take care of things at home, or get along with other people?

Not difficult at all \_\_\_\_\_  
 Somewhat difficult \_\_\_\_\_  
 Very difficult \_\_\_\_\_  
 Extremely difficult \_\_\_\_\_

Source: Spitzer RL, Kroenke K, Williams JBW, Lowe B. A brief measure for assessing generalized anxiety disorder. *Arch Intern Med.* 2006; 166: 1092-1097.

# Treatment of Anxiety and Depressive Disorders

## ✦ Pharmacotherapy:

- Serotonergic drugs- anxiety and depression
- Noradrenergic- depression
- Dopaminergic- depression
- Gabaergic- anxiety



# Treatment of Anxiety and Depression

## ✦ Pharmacotherapy

### – Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors

- ✦ Fluoxetine-20-80mg per day
  - ✦ Paroxetine-20-60mg per day
  - ✦ Fluvoxamine-150-300mg per day
  - ✦ Sertraline-50-200mg per day
  - ✦ Citalopram (40-60mg) and Escitalopram-(10-30mg)
- 
- ✦ Side effects-Insomnia, jitteriness, sleepiness, headache, upset stomach, sexual side effects



# Pharmacotherapy

## ✦ Dual Action Antidepressants (norepinephrine and serotonin)

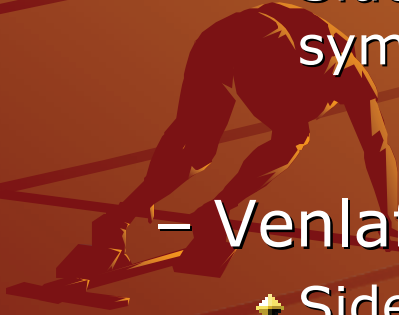
– Mirtazapine- 15-60mg per day

✦ Also used as hypnotic

✦ Side effects- sedation, weight gain, dizziness, flu like symptoms, dry mouth, constipation

– Venlafaxine-150-300mg per day

✦ Side effects-headache, insomnia, somnolence, nausea, dizziness, increase in blood pressure, sexual side effects



# Pharmacotherapy cont

## Dual Action agents, cont

### – Duloxetine (Cymbalta)

- ✦ FDA approval for GAD, also used for fibromyalgia, neuropathic pain
- ✦ Dose 30mg to start, then increase to 60mg, may go as high as 120mg to treat anxiety
- ✦ Side effects: nausea, headache, insomnia, somnolence, jitteriness, liver abnormalities, sexual side effects



# Pharmacotherapy

## + Benzodiazepines- for anxiety, agitation

- Effective but controversial due to risk of dependence
- Short term use can be helpful, while waiting for other medications to kick in
- Long term use-, less evidence of benefit over 1 yr continuous use, monitor tightly (suggest controlled substance contract)

# Psychotherapy

- ✦ Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy
  - Evidence based, manualized, time limited
  - Individual and group settings
  - Effective in depressive and anxiety disorders
  - Widely available in this area
  - Can use basic principles in brief interactions with patients

# Psychotherapy

## ✦ Supportive Psychotherapy

- Designed to bolster individual strengths
- Problem solving
- Stress or crisis management
- Can easily be adapted to brief intervention



# Combined Therapy

- ◆ A combination of psychotherapy and pharmacotherapy is more effective than either one alone
- ◆ Now confirmed by multiple studies