

## **Overview of Psychotropic Drugs in Primary Care**

There exists a myriad of prescription medications available in primary care settings that can open up avenues for general practitioners to treat uncomplicated psychiatric conditions. Adequate information on their pharmacokinetic properties will allay fears many have in dealing with them. Some further grasp of common mental illnesses may increase confidence to treat such patients.

Some pharmacological preparations have uses other than what they were initially manufactured for, often serendipitous in discovery after many years of usage, and sometimes related to their side-effects. Hence, in the event of off-label use of some of these drugs, risk-benefit assessments are recommended so as to justify the reasons for employing them to avoid medicolegal implications.

Irresponsible polypharmacy should be avoided as it can lead to dependence. Prescribing sedating psychotropic medications, not indicated for underlying conditions, to treat individual symptoms is a rampant practice the world over. However, if some combinations need to be resorted to, sound knowledge on pharmacodynamics and receptor affiliations could help reduce the number of drugs required. This presentation will hopefully address concerns related to the above dilemmas.

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