GUIDELINES FOR
THE USE OF
PSYCHOTROPIC DRUGS

A Clinical Handbook

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Edited by

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**This volume is dedicated to
Magda, Dorothy, and Gina**

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Preface

. . . to the Clinician

Although huge quantities of drugs are dispensed daily by psychiatrists, there appears to be insufficient concern about the short and long term effects of these exogenous agents on the recipients — our patients. Many clinicians have been trained at a time when knowledge of clinical psychopharmacology was superficial at best, and recent trainees do not necessarily have access to newer, constantly changing, relevant information. The busy clinician is frequently dependent upon the limited knowledge dispensed by the drug company representatives and naturally shys away from many of the more esoteric contributions appearing in the literature. Because of the foregoing issues, the Executive of the Clarke Institute of Psychiatry of the University of Toronto, with the financial support of the Ministry of Health of the Government of Ontario, organized an international symposium on May 14–17, 1982, to bring together some of the acknowledged experts in clinical psychopharmacology. This book is, in part, a reflection of that symposium.

The editors are aware that a contributed volume, however tightly edited, is not necessarily a textbook. Notwithstanding this, it was thought to be important to assemble expert opinion on current important issues, of immediate concern to the practicing clinician. With this in mind, the chapters have been organized around five themes. Schizophrenia, Affective disorders, and Anxiety, are clearly important since they are the major targets of drug use in psychiatry. The recent development of Emergency Psychiatry, and the medical and legal issues concerning the use of high dose potent drugs, necessitated a section on this topic. A section on Forensic Psychiatry was included to alert the reader to the use of drugs in certain personality disorders.

To make this book useful to the clinician, each section has been organized to deal first with the most practical issues and then to examine more theoretical

issues. Thus, the editors have attempted to distill the most relevant new information at the beginning of each section, under the heading "Hints for the Clinician." For those more interested in the underlying evidence, a summary and critique of the entire section has been written by the Chairmen who presided over the proceedings of the original conference. The chapters that follow constitute the information we believe is at the cutting edge of clinical psychopharmacology. For completeness, the interested reader will find one or two chapters at the end of each section devoted to theoretical considerations including an assessment of future directions.

Obviously, any book may fall short of projected goals. The editors regret that there could not be an opportunity to include other experts in this clinical psychopharmacology update. Nevertheless, we hope that this book provides an opportunity for practicing clinicians to gain knowledge about the newest information which could be useful to them in their clinical practice.

June 1983

Harvey C. Stancer
Paul E. Garfinkel
Vivian M. Rakoff

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Contents

Contributors	vii
---------------------	-----

Preface	xi
----------------	----

SECTION I. AFFECTIVE DISORDERS

Hints for Clinicians	1
-----------------------------	---

CHAPTER 1	
Summary of the Guidelines for Use of Antidepressants and Lithium	7
Jerry J. Warsh	

CHAPTER 2	
Use of Antidepressants in the Geriatric Population	19
Alexander H. Glassman and Janel S. Carino	

CHAPTER 3	
The Use of Antidepressant Medication in Children and Adolescents	31
Barry D. Garfinkel	

CHAPTER 4	
Mechanisms and Interventions in Tricyclic Antidepressant Overdoses	63
Sheldon H. Preskorn and Thomas A. Kent	

CHAPTER 5	
Recent Developments Regarding the Use of Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors in Psychopharmacology	77
Dennis L. Murphy, Laurence B. Guttmacher, and Robert M. Cohen	

CHAPTER 6	
Lithium in Prophylaxis and Maintenance of Affective Disorders	95
Per Vestergaard	
CHAPTER 7	
Somatic Side Effects of Long-Term Lithium Treatment	105
Paul Grof and Karl O'Sullivan	
CHAPTER 8	
Clinical Pharmacokinetics of Antidepressants	119
W.Z. Potter	
 SECTION II. SCHIZOPHRENIA	
Hints for Clinicians	139
CHAPTER 9	
Summary of Guidelines for the Use of Psychotropic Drugs in the Treatment of Schizophrenia	145
Siu W. Tang	
CHAPTER 10	
Antipsychotics in the Maintenance Treatment of Schizophrenia	151
Robert Linden, John M. Davis, and Joan Rubinstein	
CHAPTER 11	
Clinical Applications of Drug Studies	169
Mary V. Seeman	
CHAPTER 12	
Tardive Dyskinesia: Management and New Treatment	183
Daniel E. Casey and Jes Gerlach	
CHAPTER 13	
New Clinical Concepts on Neuroleptic-Induced Supersensitivity Disorders: Tardive Dyskinesia and Supersensitivity Psychosis	205
Guy Chouinard and Susanne Steinberg	
CHAPTER 14	
The Implications of Cerebral Ventricular Size for Neuroleptic Therapy of Schizophrenia	229
Daniel R. Weinberger	

Contents	xv
 CHAPTER 15 Clinical Significance of Neuroleptic Plasma Levels Stephen H. Curry	 239
 CHAPTER 16 The Clinical Utility of Plasma Neuroleptic Levels Bruce M. Cohen	 245
 CHAPTER 17 Neuroregulators and Schizophrenia: A Look at the Dopamine and Endorphin Hypotheses Jack D. Barchas, Roy King, and Philip A. Berger	 261
 CHAPTER 18 Future Research Directions in the Treatment of Schizophrenia Richard Jed Wyatt and Lynn E. DeLisi	 277
 SECTION III. ANXIETY	
 Hints for Clinicians	 295
 CHAPTER 19 Summary of the Guidelines for the Use of Psychotropic Drugs in the Treatment of Anxiety Edwards M. Sellers	 297
 CHAPTER 20 The Efficacy and Safety of Drugs to Treat Anxiety Malcolm Lader	 303
 CHAPTER 21 Clinical Trial Methodology: Issues for the Psychopharmacologic Treatment of the Anxiety Disorders Allen Raskin	 315
 CHAPTER 22 Pharmacokinetics and Drug Concentration Measurement: Relevance to Treatment of Anxiety Disorders Markku Linnoila	 329

SECTION IV. EMERGENCY PSYCHIATRY

Hints for Clinicians	341
-----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER 23

Summary of the Guidelines for the Use of Psychotropic Drugs in Emergency Psychiatry	345
--	-----

George Voineskos

CHAPTER 24

Rapid Neuroleptization: Origins and Future Developments	357
--	-----

Joe P. Tupin

CHAPTER 25

Sedatives in the Management of Psychiatric Emergencies	367
---	-----

Leo E. Hollister

CHAPTER 26

Rapid Treatment of Psychosis	377
-------------------------------------	-----

William H. Anderson

CHAPTER 27

Assessment of Psychotropic Drugs Following Acute Doses: Pharmacodynamics and Pharmacokinetics	381
--	-----

Stephen H. Curry

SECTION V. FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY

Hints for Clinicians	389
-----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER 28

Summary of the Guidelines for the Use of Psychiatric Drugs in Forensic Psychiatry	391
--	-----

Stephen J. Hucker

CHAPTER 29

Review of Research on the Use of Drugs to Control Violent Behavior	399
---	-----

Robert Kellner

Contents	xvii
 CHAPTER 30	
Review of Research into the Use of Drugs and the Treatment of Sexual Deviations with Special Reference to the Use of Cyproterone Acetate (Androcur)	411
G. Tennent	
 CHAPTER 31	
Antiandrogenic Treatment of the Paraphilias	427
Paul A. Walker, Walter J. Meyer, Lee E. Emory, and Alan L. Rubin	
 CHAPTER 32	
Limitation and Alternatives to the Use of Drugs in Violent Patients	445
John Gunn	
 Index	455