

Appropriate utilization of psychotropic medications and the Georgia Families 360° program

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Learning objectives

- A general knowledge of psychotropic medications
- Learn about the different classes of psychotropic medications
- Review possible side effects and adverse reactions
- Discuss the importance of medication management appointments



What are psychotropic medications?

- Psychotropic medications are used to treat emotional and behavioral health symptoms and disorders.
- They act on the brain and central nervous system by changing how neurotransmitters, chemicals in the brain, send information.
- The medications are used to affect mood, thoughts, behaviors and how a person processes information and perceives their environment.

Classes of psychotropic medications

There are five classes of psychotropic medications.

- Stimulants
- Antidepressants
- Antipsychotics
- Mood stabilizers
- Anxiolytics



Stimulants

- Stimulants are commonly used to treat Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Symptoms of ADHD interfere with functioning at school and in daily living activities.

Common ADHD symptoms

- Trouble focusing, organizing thoughts and learning new information
- Inability to stay still
- Being impulsive
- Impatience
- Interrupting



Stimulants (cont.)

Common stimulant medications

- Adderall and Adderall XR (amphetamine)
 - Focalin and Focalin XR (dexamethylphenidate)
 - Ritalin and Concerta (methylphenidate)
 - Vyvanse (lisdexamfetamine)
- ❖ ADHD can also be treated with nonstimulant medications.

Common nonstimulant medications

- Strattera (atomoxetine)
- Clonidine (Kapvay)
- Intuniv (guanfacine)
- Wellbutrin (bupropion)

Side effects of stimulants and non-stimulants

Possible adverse reactions

- High blood pressure
- Appetite
- Problems with growing
- Sudden death in children with pre-existing serious heart problems

Possible side effects

- Decreased appetite
- Weight loss
- Stomachaches
- Jitteriness
- Headaches
- Trouble getting to sleep

Antidepressants

Antidepressants are used to treat symptoms of depression.

Symptoms of depression

- Feelings of hopelessness or helplessness
- Loss of energy
- Changes in appetite
- Weight gain or weight loss
- Loss of pleasure in enjoyable activities
- Thoughts of suicide



Common antidepressants

- Prozac (fluoxetine)
- Zoloft (sertraline)
- Paxil (paroxetine)
- Celexa (citalopram)
- Wellbutrin (bupropion)
- Effexor (venlafaxine)
- Remeron (mirtazapine)
- Desyrel (trazodone)
- Elavil (amitriptyline)

Side effects of antidepressants

- Flu-like symptoms (headaches, nausea, stomach upset, dry mouth and extreme sweating)
- Trouble sleeping
- Irritability
- Loss of appetite or weight
- High blood pressure

Caution

Individuals prescribed antidepressants should be monitored for increased signs of depression and thoughts of suicide.

Antipsychotics

Antipsychotics are primarily used to manage psychosis, particularly in schizophrenia and bipolar disorder.

Psychosis includes:

- **Delusions** - belief or impression that is firmly maintained despite being contradicted by what is generally accepted as reality or rational argument
- **Hallucinations** - an experience involving the apparent perception of something not present
- **Disordered thought** - lack of logical continuity of thought

Common antipsychotics

- Abilify (aripiprazole)
- Zyprexa (olanzapine)
- Seroquel (quetiapine)
- Risperdal (risperidone)
- Geodon (ziprasidone)
- Thorazine (chlorpromazine)
- Haldol (haloperidol)
- Compazine (prochlorperzine)



Side effects of antipsychotics

Common side effects

- Sleepiness or tiredness
- Dizziness
- Constipation
- Dry mouth
- Blurred vision
- Sensitivity to lights
- Weight gain

Less common side effects

- Dystonia: Muscle spasms; stiff neck; tongue sticking out of mouth, trouble swallowing
- Akathisia: Restlessness, unable to sit still
- Akinesia: Rigid muscles; shuffling walk; drooling; tremors
- Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome (NMS): NMS typically consists of muscle rigidity, fever, autonomic instability and cognitive changes (this is a rare but potentially dangerous side effect)

Mood stabilizers

- Mood stabilizers are used to treat disorders characterized by intense and sustained mood shifts, such as bipolar disorder.
- A **mood shift** is an extreme or rapid change in mood (manic state to depressive state or vice versa).
- Some medications used to treat mood disorders are also used to treat seizure disorders. If the medication is used to treat seizures, it is not considered a psychotropic medication.
- Mood stabilizers may affect the metabolism, liver, kidneys and thyroid.

Mood stabilizers (cont.)

Medications that may be used to treat mood or seizures

- Carbatrol, Tegretol, Tegretol XR (carbamazepine)
- Depakote (divalproex)
- Lamictal (lamotrigine)

Medication that is only used as mood stabilizer

- Lithium



Side effects of mood stabilizers

Side effects

- Dizziness
- Drowsiness
- Nausea/vomiting
- Weight changes
- Constipation

Adverse reactions

- **Tegretol**: Reduction of blood cell production in the bone marrow and decreased red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets
- **Depakote**: Liver toxicity and liver failure (very rare but serious)
- **Lamictal**: Stevens Johnson Syndrome
- **Lithium**: Increased thirst, urination and toxicity

Monitoring and follow-up

- It is important to monitor the youth for side effects and adverse reactions. Report these to the provider.
- Watch for any changes in the youth's behavior or symptoms. This will provide insight on the effectiveness of the medication(s).
- It may be helpful to document these changes in order to discuss this with the youth's legal guardian and the provider.

Medication management

- Routine medication management appointments should be scheduled to monitor effectiveness. These appointments should be at least every three months.
- The caregiver/legal guardian should participate with the youth in each visit with the provider.
- Report side effects, adverse reactions and how the youth is responding to the medication.



Medication management (cont.)

- Rating scales (ADHD and depression) should be completed by the youth's caregiver and their teacher(s) as requested by the prescribing provider.
- The ADHD and depression rating scales should be completed prior to the start of medication and then on a yearly basis.
- Some medications require routine bloodwork to ensure the medication is at a therapeutic level and to monitor for adverse reactions/metabolic syndrome.
- The provider should also monitor height, weight, body mass index and blood pressure during appointments.

Formulary and prior authorization

- The formulary is a list of prescription drugs, both generic and brand name, used by practitioners to identify medications that offer the greatest overall value.
- The formulary includes medicines that are safe to use, affordable and approved by the Food and Drug Administration.
- All Amerigroup Community Care network doctors have access to the formulary and should use this list when writing a prescription.
- Certain medicines listed on the formulary, and those that are not listed, require prior authorization before the medication can be filled at the pharmacy.

Formulary and prior authorization (cont.)

- The formulary can be obtained by contacting the Georgia Families 360° member intake line number 1-855-661-2021 or on line at providers.amerigroup.com and clicking on the Pharmacy & Prescription list to see the list of medicines the provider can choose from.
- If a prior authorization for a medication is needed, the provider can call our Pharmacy department at 1-800-454-3730 or fill out the prior authorization form located at [https://providers.amerigroup.com/Public%20Documents/Pharmacy Prior Auth Form.pdf](https://providers.amerigroup.com/Public%20Documents/Pharmacy%20Prior%20Auth%20Form.pdf).

Georgia Families 360° Care Coordination team

- Every youth in the Georgia Families 360° program is assigned to a Regional Care Coordination team with a specified care coordinator.
- Care coordinators are the primary partner for identifying and referring services that a youth may need. They assist with identifying treatment gaps, work with treatment teams to fill the gaps and assist with the holistic treatment of the youth.



Care coordination and medication management

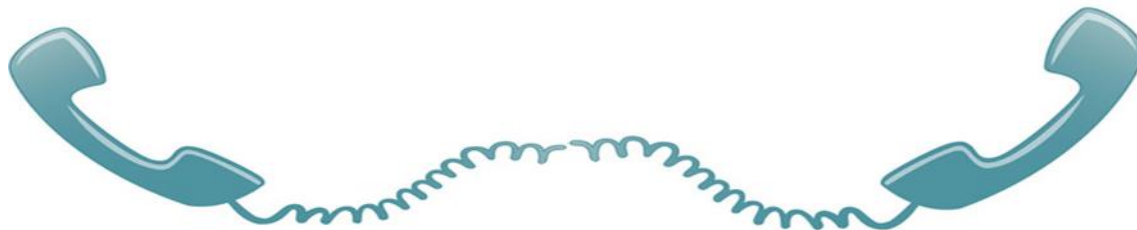
Care coordinators can assist by:

- Discussing medical and behavioral health issues
- Reviewing current services and effectiveness of the treatment (i.e., medication oversight and behavioral health counseling)
- Help locate an Amerigroup provider
- Assist involved parties in gathering needed items for clinical documentation (i.e., dates of last psychiatric residential treatment facility admit)
- Liaison between stakeholders, providers and the Amerigroup Utilization Management department

Care coordination team

For questions or for assistance, contact the
intake line, 24/7.

1-855-661-2021



Next steps

Our goal is to ensure that our youth are getting the right care at the right time. We could use your help!

- Ensure that the youth's PCP is aware of all providers working with them to ensure continuity of care.
- Contact the youth's Georgia Families 360° care coordinator for additional information or assistance.

Resources

- Georgia Families 360° program member handbook is located at providers.amerigroup.com
- Pharmacy and Prescription information located at providers.amerigroup.com
- American Psychiatric Association - www.psychiatry.org/
- American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry - www.aacap.org/



Questions?

