

Annenberg Foundation Lecture II, December 2010 Treatment of Trauma and PTSD

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PTSD Treatment

(General Principles)

- Limit memory consolidation (pharmacol.)
- Treat comorbid disorders
- Debriefing/ “help seeking pathways”
- Maintenance psychotherapy (Cogn.-Beh.)
- Most often: eclectic therapy
- EMDR
- “Trauma focused groups”
- Crucial element: Reworking of attachment

Trauma Recovery

- GOALS
 1. Process traumatic memories (metabolize = disconnect from fear)
 2. Attain control of emotional dysregulation
 3. Correct neurotransmitters dysfunction
 4. Develop resiliency = is context specific & includes viability of relationships, capacity to mentalize, empathy

Pharmacological Treatment PTSD

- Principle: Addressing of multiple neurotransmitter dysfunctions
 - 1. Alpha blockers
 - 2. Beta blockers
 - 3. “Antidepressants” (SSRI’s, NSRI’s, mixed, broad spectrum/narrow spectrum)
 - 4. Mood stabilizers (all)
 - 5. New generation antipsychotics
 - 6. Rarely: minor tranquilizers

Exposure in PTSD (cont'd.)

- Marks et al., 1998:
 - *Exposure Therapy (E); Cognitive Restructuring (C); Relaxation (R)
 - *Results: Significant improvement -- 60% with E; 50% with C; 58% with EC; 20% with R (E+C = E or C)
 - *Thus, E, C, EC = effective by means of “bit by bit digestion.”

Controlled Drug Trials for Treatment of PTSD

Author	Subjects	Agents	Length	Results
Shestatzky 1988	13pts varied trauma	Phenelzine 45-75 mg	>4-weeks	No diff. Between Phenelzine & placebo
Frank 1988	46 male veterans	Imipramine 50-100 mg Phenelzine 15-75 mg	Mean 6.4 weeks	intrusive sx- Phenelzine & Imipramine
Reist 1989	21 male veterans	Desipramine 100-200 mg	4 weeks crossover	intrusive sx- & depressive sx- ONLY in group with Comorbid MDD

Trials (cont'd)

Investigator	Subjects	Agent	Length	Results
Davidson 1990, 1993	62 male veterans	Amitriptyline 50-300 mg	8 weeks	Amitript > placebo for anxiety: MARGINAL improvement for avoidance & intrusive placebo
Braun 1990	16 Israeli patients	Alprazolam 2.5-6 mg	5 weeks	Alpraz. > placebo for anxiety: no effect on CORE Sxs
Van Der Kolk	31 vets. 33 nonvets	Fluoxetine 20- 60 mg	5 weeks	numbing/avoid ance sxs & hyperarousal sxs Nonvets >vets; depressive sxs

For additional information regarding
this subject, please contact Dr. Novac
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