

Managing the Link Between Depression and Pain

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CME Test Questions

- 1) Concerning the epidemiology of depression, which of the following are true?
 - Approximately 12 million Americans are affected with depression at any given time.
 - Women are at a higher lifetime risk of depression than men.
 - Because most depression statistics are based on retrospective data, the reported prevalence of depression is likely an underestimate.
 - Worldwide, depression is the fourth leading health problem.
 - All of the above.

- 2) Which of the following is not considered a risk factor for depression?
 - Previous episodes of depression
 - Substance abuse
 - Female gender
 - Caucasian race
 - First-degree relative with depression

- 3) The *DSM-IV* criteria for the diagnosis of major depressive disorder include which of the following physical symptoms?
 - Abdominal pain
 - Dizziness
 - Sleep disturbances
 - Fatigue
 - C and D

- 4) Criteria for major depressive disorder as outlined by the *DSM-IV* focus on the emotional symptoms of depression. Why are pain and other physical symptoms not part of the diagnostic criteria?
- Aches and pains are only rarely associated with depression.
 - Though aches and pains are common in depression and other psychiatric disorders, the criteria were established to help differentiate depression from the other disorders.
 - Pain and physical symptoms are often present, but these symptoms do not play a role in treatment plans.
 - Patients with depression may have pain, but they will always have significant emotional symptoms to make the diagnosis.
- 5) A 37-year-old female has made three visits to your office with complaints of fatigue and generalized body aches. After a thorough evaluation, she does admit also to feelings of sadness and anhedonia. You start her on a trial of medication, keeping in mind that her painful symptoms will affect her emotional symptoms. Which of the following is true about the relationship between pain and other depressive symptoms?
- Patients with painful conditions have longer episodes of depression.
 - Depressed patients with pain have more frequent episodes of depression.
 - Patients with depression and pain may be more resistant to treatment.
 - Depressed patients with chronic pain syndromes have longer and more resistant chronic pain.
 - All of the above.
- 6) Though the biochemical causes of pain and depression are not completely understood, the neurotransmitters norepinephrine and serotonin are commonly implicated. Which of the following mechanisms could explain this biochemical link between depression and pain?
- Norepinephrine and serotonin trigger multiple downstream reactions that affect symptoms of pain and depression.
 - Serotonin and norepinephrine bind together in patients with depression and pain causing an unstable neuropeptide.
 - Norepinephrine and serotonin are overproduced in patients with depression and pain, thus explaining the effectiveness of serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors.
 - Norepinephrine and serotonin released in the central nervous system may modulate the response to peripheral pain signals.
 - Both a and d.

- 7) What are two areas of the brain affected by serotonin and norepinephrine that likely play a role in the symptoms of pain and depression?
- Prefrontal cortex and limbic system
 - Limbic system and cerebellum
 - Prefrontal cortex and cerebellum
 - Cerebellum and occipital lobe
- 8) A 45-year-old male is diagnosed with depression after presenting with vague physical symptoms. You start the patient on an SNRI and schedule the patient for a follow-up appointment in two weeks. The patient is worried that he will never "feel the same again." With regard to the current goal of depression treatment, what do you tell the patient?
- "If you're not completely better in two weeks, you probably won't ever improve."
 - "Our goal is to treat your depression to remission and allow you to return to your normal activities. Everyone responds differently to medication, but we'll follow your progress closely."
 - "Our goal is to at least decrease your symptoms by 50 percent, and I'm optimistic that we can be successful."
 - "Depression is a chronic disease. I hope that you get better, but you will always have some symptoms of depression."
- 9) What is true of tricyclic medications?
- They are considered first-line therapy for patients with depression.
 - Dual-acting tricyclics are effective for the treatment of depression and pain.
 - Tricyclic medications have a significant side effect profile that has limited their use.
 - Studies on tricyclic agents have demonstrated the importance of dual-acting agents in patients with depression and pain.
 - b and d
 - b, c and d
- 10) Which of the following is true of patients with depression and painful symptoms?
- SNRI medications are effective medications in this patient population.
 - Improvement of the painful symptoms is crucial to achieving remission of the emotional symptoms of depression.
 - A team approach including active patient participation is crucial to successful treatment.
 - All of the above

CME Evaluation

Managing the Link Between Depression and Pain

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- Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. Was the topic relevant to your needs and interests?

- Yes No

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- Yes No

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