Rating Scale (PBRS), and the Chapman Psychosis Proneness Scales.

Treatment

Psychosis caused by schizophrenia or another mental illness should be treated by a psychiatrist and/or psychologist. Other medical and mental health professionals may be part of the treatment team, depending on the severity of the psychosis and the needs of the patient. Medication and/or psychosocial therapy is typically employed to treat the underlying disorder.

Antipsychotic medications commonly prescribed to treat psychosis include risperidone (Risperdal), thioridazine (Mellaril), haloperidol (Haldol), chlorpromazine (Thorazine), clozapine (Clozaril), loxapine (Loxitane), molindone hydrochloride (Moban), thiothixene (Navane), and olanzapine (Zyprexa). Possible common side-effects of antipsychotics include dry mouth, drowsiness, muscle stiffness, and hypotension. More serious side effects include tardive dyskinesia (involuntary movements of the body) and neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS), a potentially fatal condition characterized by muscle rigidity, altered mental status, and irregular pulse and blood pressure.

Once an acute psychotic episode has subsided, psychosocial therapy and living and vocational skills training may be recommended. Drug maintenance treatment is usually prescribed to prevent further episodes.

Prognosis

The longer and more severe a psychotic episode, the poorer the prognosis for the patient. However, early diagnosis and long-term follow-up care can improve the outcome for patients with psychotic disorders. Schizophrenia has a 60% treatment success rate.

See also Neurosis

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Further Reading

Further Information
National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). 6001 Executive Boulevard, Rm. 8184, MSC 9663, Bethesda, MD, USA. 20892-9663, fax: (301)443-4279, (301)443-4513. Email: nimhinfo@nih.gov. http://www.nimh.nih.gov.
genitourinary system (menstrual disorders and sexual dysfunction).

Probably the most well-known psychosomatic connection is that of stress and coronary heart disease. The term “Type A” has been used for over twenty years to describe the aggressive, competitive, impatient, controlling type of person whom researchers have found to be more prone to heart disease than people who are more easygoing and mild-mannered and less hostile and concerned with time. In 1981, a panel appointed by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute found that Type A behavior poses a greater risk of coronary heart disease and myocardial infarction (heart attack) than do cigarette smoking, age, hypertension, or a high serum cholesterol count.

Emotional stress can also affect the immune system, raising the risk to the body from such foreign invaders as bacteria, viruses, and cancer cells. People under stress are more likely to develop infectious diseases, including those stemming from the reactivation of latent herpes viruses. It is known that several of the body’s reactions to stress, including the release of cortisol, adrenaline, and other hormones, suppress the activity of the immune system. A special field, psychoneuroimmunology, studies how the interaction of psychological and physiological reactions affects the functioning of the immune system.

People suffering from psychosomatic disorders have been helped by treatment of either their physical symptoms, the underlying psychological causes, or both. If the disorder is in an advanced stage (such as in severe asthma attacks, perforated ulcers, or debilitating colitis) symptomatic treatment must be undertaken initially as an emergency measure before the emotional component can be addressed. Psychological approaches range from classic psychoanalysis, which addresses a person’s early traumas and conflicts, to behavior therapy that focuses on changing learned behaviors that create or increase anxiety. Medications such as tranquilizers or antidepressants may be effective in relieving symptoms of psychosomatic disorders. Hypnosis has successfully been used to treat hyperventilation, ulcers, migraines, headaches, and other complaints. Today, psychologists commonly treat psychosomatic ailments with the aid of such relaxation techniques as progressive relaxation, autogenic training, transcendental meditation, and yoga. Biofeedback has been used in treating a number of different clinical problems, including tachycardia, hypertension, and both tension and migraine headaches.

**Psycosurgery**

Highly controversial medical procedures where areas of the brain are destroyed or disabled through surgery as treatment for mental illness.

Psychosurgery involves severing or otherwise disabling areas of the brain to treat a personality disorder, behavior disorder or other mental illness. The most common form of psychosurgery is the lobotomy, where the nerves connecting the frontal lobes of the brain and the thalamus or hypothalamus are severed. Performed first in the late 1930s, by the 1940s lobotomies were recommended for patients diagnosed with schizophrenia, severe obsessive-compulsive disorder, severe depression, and uncontrollable aggressive behavior. Other psychosurgeries also involve severing nerve connections to the hypothalamus, since it plays a key role in controlling emotions. Psychosurgery has been recommended less frequently as more effective drugs for treatment of psychosomatic disorders have been developed.

**Further Reading**


**Psychotherapy**

The treatment of mental or emotional disorders and adjustment problems through the use of psychological techniques rather than through physical or biological means.

Psychoanalysis, the first modern form of psychotherapy, was called the “talking cure,” and the many varieties of therapy practiced today are still characterized by their common dependence on a verbal exchange between the counselor or therapist and the person seeking help. The therapeutic interaction is characterized by mutual trust, with the goal of helping individuals change destructive or unhealthy behaviors, thoughts, and emotions. It is common for experienced therapists to combine several different approaches or techniques. The most common approaches are discussed below.

**Psychodynamic approach**

Freudian psychoanalysis places emphasis on uncovering unconscious motivations and breaking down de-