



Psychiatric Medications for Older Adults: The Concise Guide

Carl Salzman

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Pharmacotherapy can greatly improve the quality of life of older adults with psychiatric problems. Yet prescribing is typically complicated by the effects of normal aging, challenges in diagnosis, the presence of medical comorbidities, and the use of multiple medications. This quick-reference guide presents the vital information needed to develop and monitor safe, effective psychiatric regimens for older adults. From the editor of the leading textbook on geriatric psychopharmacology, the volume provides handy diagnostic pointers for assessing prevalent symptoms and disorders. It offers concise discussions of commonly used medications, summarizing their benefits and limitations for use with this population. Delineating tried-and-true guidelines to help enhance therapeutic effects while decreasing unwanted side effects, this book belongs at the right hand of all prescribers and caregivers working with older adults.

The volume first provides overarching principles for evaluating older adults appropriately, understanding their concerns about medication, and maximizing treatment compliance. Salzman then moves chapter-by-chapter through frequently encountered clinical problems: depression, anxiety, sleep problems, failing memory, and agitation. Chapters describe the clinical presentation of each disorder and enumerate effective assessment strategies. Included are tips for distinguishing between different disorders and recognizing medical and psychiatric comorbidities. Medications used to treat each problem are then reviewed. Emphasizing a "start low, go slow" approach, the book offers practical advice on how to select the right medication, determine starting and maintenance dosages, and anticipate side effects that may be of particular concern to frail patients or those with chronic health conditions. Throughout the volume, case illustrations, tables, and bulleted lists present key information in a concise, accessible format. The appendix features invaluable tables that summarize recommended dosage ranges for all medications discussed and encapsulate potential drug interactions.

Ideal for primary care physicians, nurses, and psychiatrists, this guide also belongs on the desks of fellows and residents in geriatric medicine and psychiatry, nursing home administrators, social workers, psychologists, and other medical, mental health, and social service professionals. While written for professionals, the book's clear, factual style will also make it accessible to many family members and older patients themselves.

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