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MINOR MIXED DEPRESSION, FORMERLY MIXED AFFECTIVE STATE: A TREATABLE CONDITION IN VIOLENT COURT-ORDERED DETENTION PATIENTS WITH A PERSONALITY DISORDER

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EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:

At the conclusion of this session, the participant should be able to: 1) Identify the clinical picture of minor mixed depression, formerly mixed affective state; and 2) Apply this knowledge to improve the treatment of patients with personality disorders, especially in court-ordered detention patients.

SUMMARY:

Introduction. We were struck by the concept of minor mixed depression, formerly called mixed affective state. Method. An empirical study in different clinical settings. Results. 1. In an outpatient setting (2005) about 70% of the patients referred with major depression, appeared to have mixed states using antidepressant medication. Changing the antidepressant for a mood stabilizer brought substantial relief in the majority of cases. It might be supposed here that only patients with the most intense complaints, such as racing thoughts and unprovoked outbursts of rage, had been referred. 2. In an outpatient forensic setting (2008) this clinical picture was frequently displayed, too. The patients were referred with violent offences and were diagnosed with borderline- or antisocial personality disorder and/or intermittent explosive disorder, using no antidepressants. About 70% could be treated with a mood stabilizer alone or in combination with quetiapine. 3. In a setting for court-ordered detention patients (2009) a combination of all of the above was seen in often notorious violent patients who sometimes had been prescribed SSRI' in high dosages for years. Results of tapering off the antidepressants and treatment with a mood stabilizer alone or in combination with quetiapine or periciazine, using plasma level monitoring, were dramatic, not only subjectively but also measured by the number of incidents in the ward. Discussion. In all three groups

SCIENTIFIC AND CLINICAL REPORTS

49

of patients there was a positive family history for mood swings and bad temper. In the first group the mixed state was induced by antidepressants, in the second group the symptoms were genuine whereas in the third group both elements were present which caused a double worsening

of the mental condition of the patients. Conclusion. Recognition of minor mixed depression, formerly called mixed affective state, can have a significant impact on treatment outcome in violent court-ordered detention patients with personality disorders.

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