Antianxiety Drugs

Week 19
Anxiety

A feeling of apprehension, worry, or uneasiness that may or may not be based on reality
Anxiolytics

- Block neurotransmitter receptor sites
Types of Antianxiety Drugs

- Benzodiazepines—alprazolam, lorazepam, diazepam
- Nonbenzodiazepines—buspirone, zolpidem, hydroxyzine
Antianxiety Drugs

Used to manage anxiety disorders and for short-term treatment of anxiety symptoms

Seizures

Alcohol withdrawal

Preanesthetic sedation
Benzodiazepines

Act by potentiating the effects of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA)
Benzodiazepines

- Diazepam (Valium)
- Clonazepam (Clonapin)
- Lorazepam (Ativan)
- Oxazepam (Serax)
- Midazolam (Versed)
- Chlordiazepoxide (Librium)
- Alprazolam (Xanax)
Benzodiazepines

- Insomnia
  - Estazolam, flurazepam, quazepam, temazepam, triazolam
- Muscle spasticity
  - Diazepam
- Alcohol withdrawal
  - Chlordiazepoxide, clorazepate, diazepam, lorazepam, oxazepam
- Induction of anesthesia
  - Midazolam, diazepam, lorazepam
- Panic disorder
  - Alprazolam, clonazepam, lorazepam
Benzodiazepines

• Cautions
  – Cross the placental barrier
  – Use in first trimester associated with fetal deformities
  – Enters breast milk
  – Elderly
  – Metabolites may be active and produce effects long after the drug has cleared
Flumazenil

- Benzodiazepine antagonist
- Reverses sedation, respiratory depression and coma
- 6-10 minutes after IV administration
Benzodiazepines

• Uses
  – Anxiety
    • Alprazolam, chlordiazepoxide, clorazepate, diazepam, lorazepam, oxazepam
  – Insomnia
    • Estazolam, flurazepam, temazepam, triazolam,
  – Seizure disorders
    • Clonazepam, clorazepate, diazepam, lorazepam
Nonbenzodiazepines

• Buspirone acts on the brain’s dopamine and serotonin receptors
• Hydroxyzine acts on the hypothalamus and brain stem reticular formation
Adverse Reactions

- Transient, mild drowsiness
- Lethargy, apathy, fatigue
- Disorientation, restlessness
- Anger
- Constipation, diarrhea
- Dry mouth, nausea, visual disturbances
- Incontinence
Antidepressants

- Venlafazxine (Effexor)
- Paroxetine (Paxil)
- Escitalopram (Lexapro)
Ruby Hinton is an 87-year-old African American woman. She is often agitated because of her worsening dementia. The physician has written an order for Mrs. Hinton to receive lorazepam (Ativan) 0.5 mg 3 times a day as needed.

1. What are some things to consider as the nurse caring for Mrs. Hinton with regards to the lorazepam?

2. What should the nurse’s ongoing assessment consist of for Mrs. Hinton?

3. As a result of this new medication, Mrs. Hinton has developed dry mouth. What should you do as the nurse caring for Mrs. Hinton?
• True/False
• Benzodiazepines exert their tranquilizing effect by potentiating the effects of gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA).
• Physiologic manifestations of anxiety includes decreased blood pressure and pulse rate.
• Hydroxyzine produces antianxiety effect by acting on the hypothalamus and brainstem reticular formation.
• Buspirone is not a safe choice for older adults with anxiety because it causes excessive sedation.
• The nurse can administer oral antianxiety drugs with meals to decrease the possibility of gastrointestinal (GI) upset.
• Anxiolytic drugs exert their tranquilizing effect by blocking certain _____ receptor sites.
• Hydroxyzine produces its antianxiety effect by acting on the _____ and brainstem reticular formation.
• The benzodiazepines are contraindicated during pregnancy and __________ because of reports of floppy infant syndrome.
• -_____ equipment should be readily available during parenteral (particularly IV) administration.
• There is an increased risk for _____ toxicity when an anxiolytic is administered with digoxin.