

II. Focus on Anxiety Disorders

Overview

The increasing number of treatments approved for anxiety disorders has put remission within reach for more patients than ever before. Remission is now a frequent end point in clinical trials as well as the recommended goal in clinical practice. Measurement of remission varies from study to study, however, as no single definition of remission has yet become standard.

Studies of patients with anxiety disorders show that they are high utilizers of primary care services. Despite this, a large percentage of patients remains undiagnosed and untreated. People with undiagnosed anxiety disorders may be difficult to recognize in primary care, particularly because they usually present with somatic complaints. To successfully recognize and treat this population of patients, primary care physicians must become familiar with the typical presentation of anxiety in their patients. In this supplement, psychiatrists discuss the definition of remission, the neurobiology of anxiety disorders and mechanisms of action for pharmacologic treatment, and describe methods of identifying patients with anxiety disorders in the primary care setting.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this activity, participants should be able to:

- Describe the importance of treating anxiety disorders to remission.
- Discuss the prevalence and comorbidity of common anxiety disorders and their impact on quality of life.
- Explain how patients with anxiety disorders present to primary care physicians.
- Discuss the treatment of anxiety disorders in the primary care setting.

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Target Audience

This activity is specifically designed for psychiatrists and primary care physicians who treat depression and anxiety disorders.

Accreditation Statement

The Strategic Institute for Continuing Health Care Education is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

The Strategic Institute for Continuing Health Care Education designates this educational activity for a maximum of 1.0 category 1 credit toward the AMA Physician's Recognition Award. Each physician should claim only those credits that he/she actually spent on the activity.

Date of Release, Expiration, and Review

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CME Activity Description

This educational activity is a self-study journal supplement. To receive credit for this activity, participants must read this section of the supplement and complete the posttest and evaluation that appear on pages 46–48. Estimated time for completion is 1.0 hour. Completed posttests and evaluations must be returned no later than November 25, 2004. A score of at least 70% is required in order to receive a CME certificate for this activity.

Disclosure of Unlabeled or Unapproved Uses of Drugs

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