MAJOR CLASSES OF ANTIDEPRESSANT DRUGS

**Key:**
- **‘FIRST GENERATION’ ANTIDEPRESSANTS**
- **‘SECOND GENERATION’ ANTIDEPRESSANTS**
- **NOTE: DESIGNATIONS ARE ARBITRARY - DIFFERENT SOURCES CAN GROUP THEM DIFFERENTLY**

### MONOAMINE OXIDASE INHIBITORS (MAOIs)

**THE FIRST CLASS OF MODERN ANTIDEPRESSANTS**

**EXAMPLES**
- Iproniazid (discontinued), phenelzine (Nardil), isocarboxazid (Marplan), tranylcypromine (Parnate), selegiline (Emsam), moclobemide (Amira).

**DETAILS**
Inhibit monoamine oxidase, preventing breakdown of neurotransmitters. Rarely used due to toxicity and potentially lethal food & drug interactions.

### TETRACYCLIC & UNICYCLIC ANTIDEPRESSANTS

**PRIMARILY COMPOUNDS THAT DON’T FIT OTHER CLASSES**

**EXAMPLES**
- Amoxapine (Asendin), bupropion (Wellbutrin), mirtazapine (Remeron), maprotiline (Ludiomil).

**DETAILS**
Varially inhibit serotonin & norepinephrine reuptake. Some poorly understood. Bupropion is amongst the few antidepressants without sexual side-effects.

### SSRIss

**SELECTIVE SEROTONIN REUPTAKE INHIBITORS**

**EXAMPLES**
- Fluoxetine (Prozac), sertraline (Zoloft), citalopram (Celexa), paroxetine (Paxil), fluvoxamine (Faverin), escitalopram (Lexapro).

**DETAILS**
Inhibit reuptake of serotonin. High toxic dose and mild side effects. The most widely prescribed antidepressants in many countries.

### TRICYCLIC ANTIDEPRESSANTS (TCAs)

**DOMINANT CLASS UNTIL INTRODUCTION OF SSRIs**

**EXAMPLES**
- Imipramine (Tofranil), chlorimipramine (Anafranil), nortriptyline (Aventyl), lofepramine (Lomont), amitriptyline (Tryptomer).

**DETAILS**
Inhibit reuptake of neurotransmitters; mostly epinephrine, and serotonin. Due to side effects and potential for fatal overdose, now seldom used.

### SARIs

**SEROTONIN ANTAGONIST & REUPTAKE INHIBITORS**

**EXAMPLES**
- Trazodone (Desyrel), etoperidone (Axiomin), lorpiprazole (Normarex), mepiprazol (Psigodal), nefazodone (Serzone).

**DETAILS**
Prevent reuptake of serotonin, as well as stopping it binding to cell receptors. Nefazodone can be toxic to the liver and is no longer commonly prescribed.

### SNRIs

**SEROTONIN-NOREPINEPHRINE REUPTAKE INHIBITORS**

**EXAMPLES**
- Venlafaxine (Efexor), desvenlafaxine (Pristiq), duloxetine (Cymbalta).

**DETAILS**
Inhibit both serotonin & norepinephrine reuptake. Studies have shown they may have a modest increase in efficacy compared to SSRIs. They also have slightly milder side effects.

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