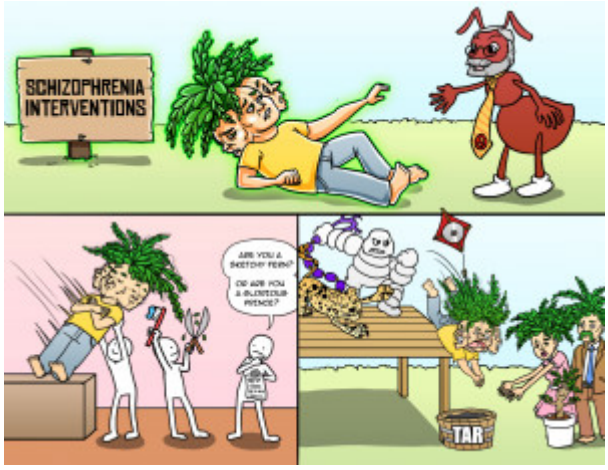
Schizophrenia Interventions

Schizophrenia is an unfortunate psychological disease that leads to several positive and negative symptoms in patients. Appropriate treatment involves the use of antipsychotic medications, as well as a series of interventions. These include building trust with the patient, assistance with self-care, and reality testing. Patients on medication should be monitored for tardive dyskinesia and neuroleptic malignant syndrome. Furthermore, family therapy is imperative.



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Drug Therapy

Antipsychotics
Ant-Tie-Psychiatrist
Patients who are diagnosed with schizophrenia should be treated with antipsychotics (neuroleptics) to help improve their quality of life. These medications; however, have several side effects, so you should always be aware of extrapyramidal symptoms and neuroleptic malignant syndrome in these patients.

Interventions

Build Trust
Trust-fall
Often these patients suffer from delusions, so it is important to build trust and rapport with the patient. It is through this relationship that you can better help the patient.

Assistance with Self-care
Assisting with Self-care
Schizophrenic patients often forgo hygiene and self-care, as they are distracted with their symptoms. Thus, assisting patients with their self-care can improve mental status and social functioning. We want these patients to be able to perform their ADLs independently.

Reality Testing
Reality Test
Often, it is important to follow up patients who have schizophrenia with reality testing. This helps conclude whether treatment is effective, or if delusions and hallucinations are persisting.

Monitor for Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome
Nerve-Leopard Malignant-man
Patients taking antipsychotic medications can develop neuroleptic malignant syndrome, which is a severe side effect. This syndrome is composed of rigidity of muscle ("lead-pipe"), fever, encephalopathy, and unstable vital signs. Treat patients with cooling blankets and pharmacologic intervention. Mild cases are treated with bromocriptine (Parlodel), while severe cases are treated with dantrolene (Dantrium).

Monitor for Tardive Dyskinesia
Tar-dive Disc-kite
A very common side effect of antipsychotic medications is tardive dyskinesia. This is described as stereotypic oral-facial (lip-smacking) and other motor movements. These are potentially irreversible. You can track involuntary movements using the AIMS (abnormal involuntary movement scale) test.

Family Therapy
Family Catching Fall
Educating the family on recognizing schizophrenic symptoms, as well as signs of drug toxicity are very important. Goals of family therapy are to develop trust among the patient and family, and allow the family to participate in support groups, if needed.

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