

Preface

The first edition of the *Pharmacotherapy of Depression* was published in 2004 and the editors wish to express appreciation for the positive reviews of that book. The second edition is similar in organization to the first, but has undergone major revisions of every chapter, the addition of new chapters, and expansion of our expert contributors. We have tried to provide sufficient depth in our reviews of the research literature to support our clinical recommendations without burdening the reader with information that is not of clinical importance for the prescriber.

The first chapter reviews the neurobiology of depression, which lays the groundwork for understanding the mechanisms of action of antidepressants. In the next chapter, we review the general principles guiding the diagnosis and medication treatment of unipolar depression. The clinical pharmacology of antidepressants is reviewed in some detail, supplemented by tables that provide information on dosing, indications, and metabolism. Augmentation strategies are reviewed, including the use of nontraditional agents. The chapters that follow address the use of antidepressants in special populations, such as the elderly and depressed individuals with psychosis, bipolar disorder, substance abuse, and posttraumatic stress disorder. The complex issues involving the diagnosis and treatment of depression during pregnancy are thoroughly reviewed in Chap. 8 and provide a synthesis of the scientific literature in the area, one that is noted for contradictory and controversial findings, and guidelines for prescribing. The following chapter provides an overview of the treatment of depression in the pediatric population, highlighting clinical concerns such as suicide risk. The book concludes with two chapters at the interface of medicine and psychiatry in the treatment of mood disorders: managing depression in primary care settings and depression associated with medical illnesses.

We are indebted to the outstanding clinician scientists who have contributed to this volume. They all are leaders in their fields and represent a broad spectrum of institutions, including current and former NIMH senior scientists, Harvard Medical School, Boston University School of Medicine, Tufts University School of Medicine, and Indiana University School of Medicine. The skill sets of the contributors include bench to bedside talents that have produced a strong scientific foundation that seamlessly transitions into recommendations for clinical practice. The book is based on our courses and lectures on the clinical psychopharmacology of depression that we have developed for practicing physicians, residents in psychiatry, neurology, and medicine,

as well as psychologists, medical students, social workers, nurses, mental health counselors, and graduate students. We are grateful for the feedback of our colleagues, trainees, and students, who have been essential in modifications of the content of this edition.

The editors wish to thank Ms. Michele Procida for her ability to motivate us to complete this project. She was able to keep us directed, energized, and enthusiastic at times when progress stalled. She also tolerated late night emails and last minute manuscript changes with grace. We would also like to thank Ann Marie Ciraulo RN for her critical review of the content of the chapters, review of relevant literature, and helpful suggestions for modifications.

We sincerely hope that the reader will find this book a helpful guide to treating depression.

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<http://www.springer.com/978-1-60327-434-0>

Pharmacotherapy of Depression

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2011, XI, 423 p., Hardcover

ISBN: 978-1-60327-434-0

A product of Humana Press