

# Preface

The current conduct of clinical trials of new antidepressants is based on a model developed five decades earlier and now turns out to be very wasteful. Too many drugs with unusual, potentially therapeutic actions have been found to be non-efficacious. It appears to be due in great part to the methodology used in such trials to evaluate efficacy. The established model utilizes only the Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression (Ham-D) (1960), an instrument valid for measuring severity of the overall disorder but insensitive to the measurement of change in major components of depression. Viewing the established trial as it is conducted today, we learn whether a new drug significantly reduces the severity of the overall disorder, but gains little to no knowledge about its onset and its profile of clinical actions. Consequently, clinical trials have added little to the advance of science in clinical psychopharmacology. This has lagged the development of new, more effective drugs and waning interest among the pharmaceutical companies to continue active research and drug development in this sphere.

In the interest of overcoming these handicaps and advancing the field, this book puts forth new models for conducting clinical trials. The new models take advantage of knowledge gained over the past five decades on the nature of the depressive disorders. It emphasizes the concept of dimensionality, and new findings on the neurobehavioral mechanisms underlying the efficacy of antidepressant drugs. I trust that such new analyses will bring clinical trials closer to the world of science, and help in moving the field in equally new directions.

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Clinical Trials of Antidepressants  
How Changing the Model Can Uncover New, More  
Effective Molecules

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