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Psychiatric manifestations and the role of functional integrative medicine

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Statement of the Problem: Treatment of psychiatric manifestations often have a symptom-based approach to treatment with psychotropic medications without addressing or determining the root cause of the issue or exacerbating factors. Patient assessment with mental health complaints by clinicians should take a multifactorial approach investigating possible systemic medical factors, vitamin deficiencies, or hormonal imbalances and maladaptive lifestyle before or in conjunction with consideration of psychotropic medications depending on the severity or degree of psychiatric symptoms. Although there is an essential need for more research into determining the impact of systemic issues related to hormonal and vitamin deficiencies as well as the inclusion of antioxidant and gut microbiomes in treatment related to mental health complaints, there is still enough information to give consideration to these factors and their significance upon assessment. Assessing hormonal status of the thyroid, cortisol, sex hormones, as well as vitamin deficiencies will be explored and their impact on mood-related issues. There is evidence that the hypothalamo-pituitary axis and the disorders associated with its dysfunction is relevant to the pathophysiology of bipolar affective disorder and depression (Chakrabarti, 2011). Certain vitamin deficiencies have a direct impact on mood disorders, psychotic states as well as slow cerebration (Kamrowska, 2010). The emphasis on identifying these factors that impact mental health would be increased awareness of treating the whole person, and not focusing purely on symptom management. The detrimental effects on the health of individuals with the use of psychotropics (antipsychotics, mood stabilizers, antidepressants) have a strong association to multiple physical diseases including obesity, dyslipidemia, diabetes mellitus, thyroid disorders, hyponatremia; cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, hematological, musculoskeletal and renal diseases (Correll, 2015). These disease states that are associated with the use of psychiatric medications directly impact the quality of life of the individual as well as increases the risk of mortality (Diez, 2016). The emphasis on the importance of a functional assessment and treatment based on objective clinical information from diagnostic testing will be reviewed to be considered upon receiving an individual suffering mental health complaints. This can be used as an adjunct to psychotropics depending on the severity of the symptoms presented, or initially in mild to moderate symptomatology with close monitoring.