Treatment of Panic Disorder

R. Bruce Lydiard, MD, PhD
Director
Southeast Health Consultants, LLC
Charleston, SC
<www.mindyourhealth.net>

Panic Disorder Presentation Outline

- Pre-lecture Questions
- Main teaching Points
- Illness Characteristics
- Morbidity and Comorbidity
- Diagnostic and Assessment Issues
- Treatment Options
- Summary
- Post-lecture questions

Question #1

True or False

Males Have a Higher Lifetime Frequency of Panic Disorder in the U.S. as Compared to Females.

Question #2

True or False

When Panic Disorder and Major Depression co-exist, the risk for suicide attempts increased

Question #3

Panic Disorder increases the risk for other psychiatric disorders : GAD, OCD, social anxiety disorder, major depression

Which usually precedes panic disorder?

Question #4

What is the APA recommend as

First Line Pharmacotherapy for Panic Disorder?

Question #5

Which sub-cortical structure is the critical brain nucleus for fear conditioning?

Teaching Point #1

Choosing an agent which covers the disorders most often co-existing with PD, such as an SSRI or other broad-spectrum antidepressant

Teaching Point #2

Fear is modulated by both Cortical and Subcortical Areas in the Fear Circuit

Important Brain Areas Include:

Prefrontal Cortex, Hippocampus, Amygdala, Locus Ceruleus

Teaching Point #3

The Majority of Patients with PD Require

Long Term Treatment.

DSM-IV Panic Disorder

- One or more unexpected panic attacks
- At least one month of worry, including change in cognition or behavior
- With or without fearful avoidance (= agoraphobia)

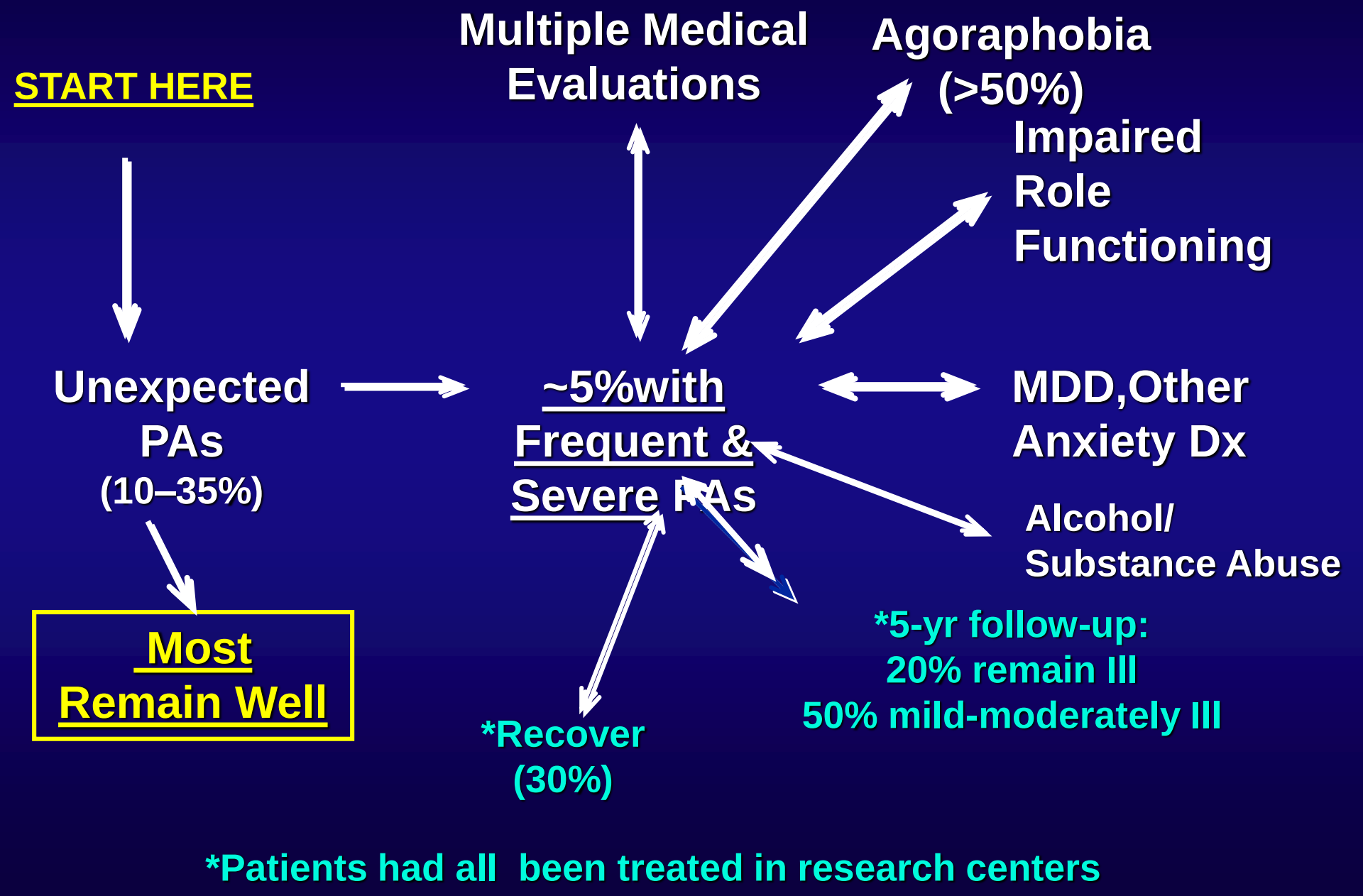
*

DSM-IV Panic Attack Symptoms

At Least 4, usually peak within 10-20 Minutes

1. Palpitations, pounding heart
2. Chest Pain or discomfort
3. Shortness of breath
4. Feeling of choking
5. Feeling of dizzy, unsteady, lightheaded or faint
6. Paresthesias (numbness or tingling sensations)
7. Chills or hot flushes
8. Trembling or shaking
9. Sweating
10. Nausea or abdominal stress
11. Derealization (feelings of unreality) or depersonalization (being detached)
12. Fear of losing control or going crazy
13. Fear of dying

PD: Onset, Persistence and Complications



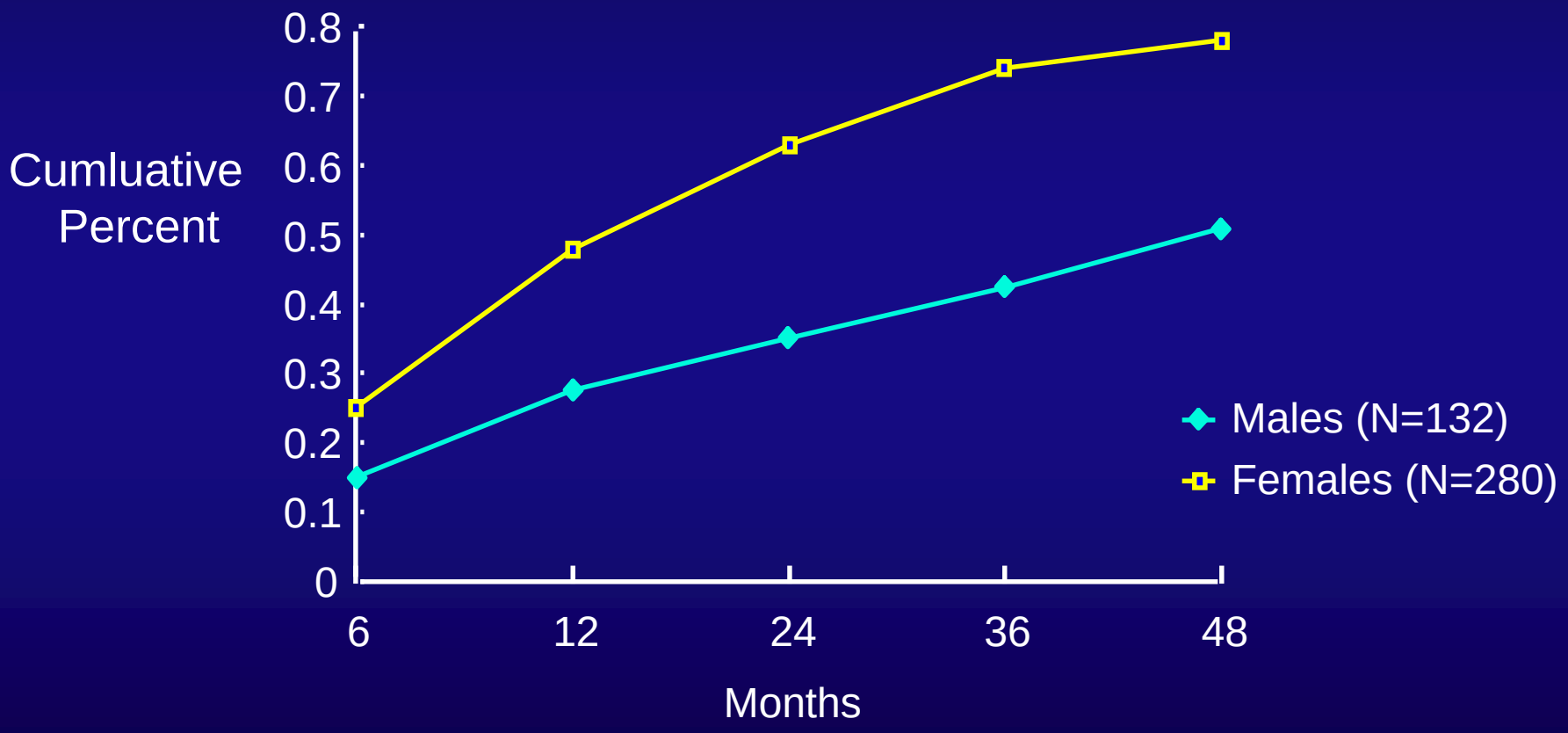
*Patients had all been treated in research centers

PD Frequency in the U.S.

	Lifetime	12 Month
• Male	2.0%	1.3%
• Female	5.0%	3.2%

Kessler et al. 1994

Rate Of Relapse
In Treated Males and Females



Yonkers et al. Depress Anxiety 2003;17:173-9.

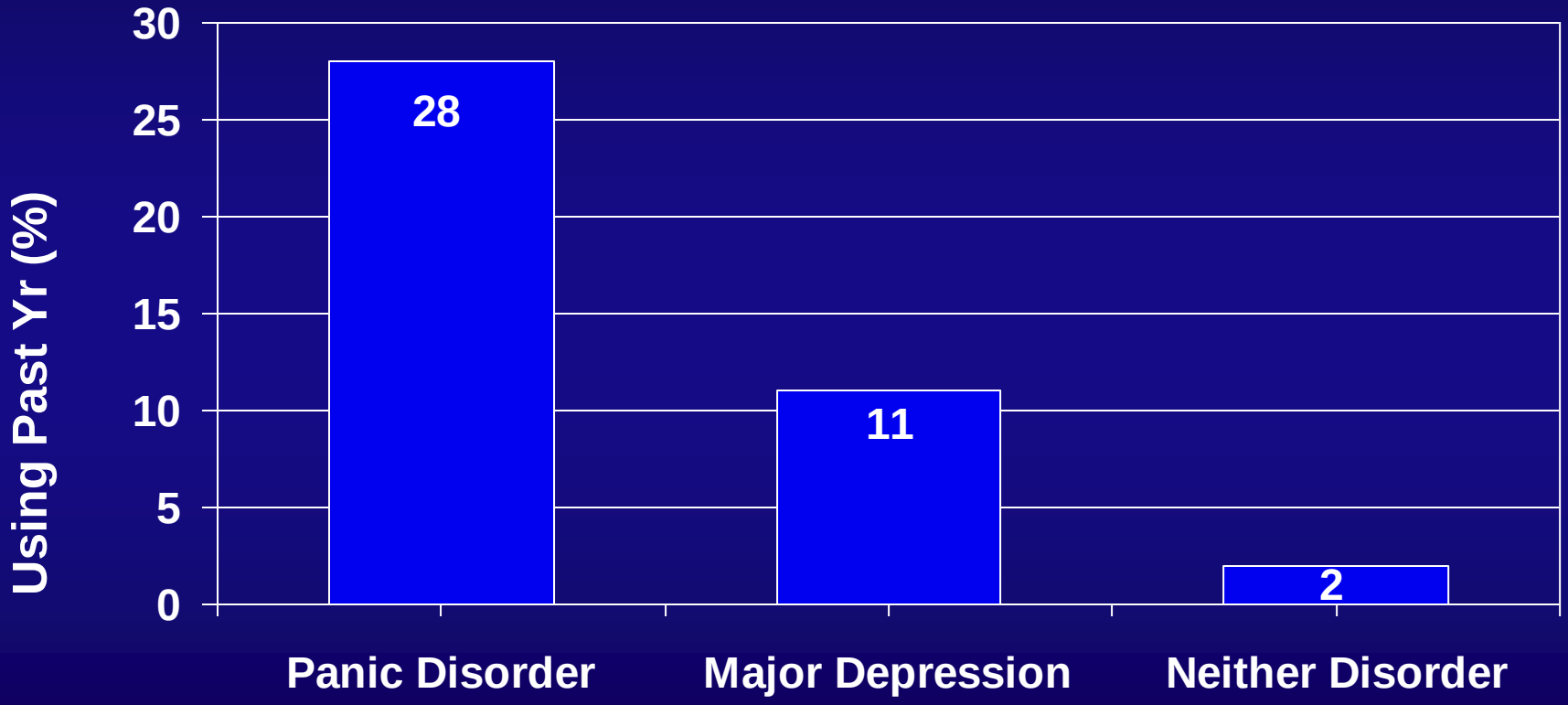
Increased Medical Utilization in PD
Top 10% of Users

Odds ratio 5 MD visits

	Males	Female
• MDE	1.5	3.4
• Panic disorder	8.2	5.2
• Phobic disorder	2.7	1.6

Simon and Von Korff, 1991

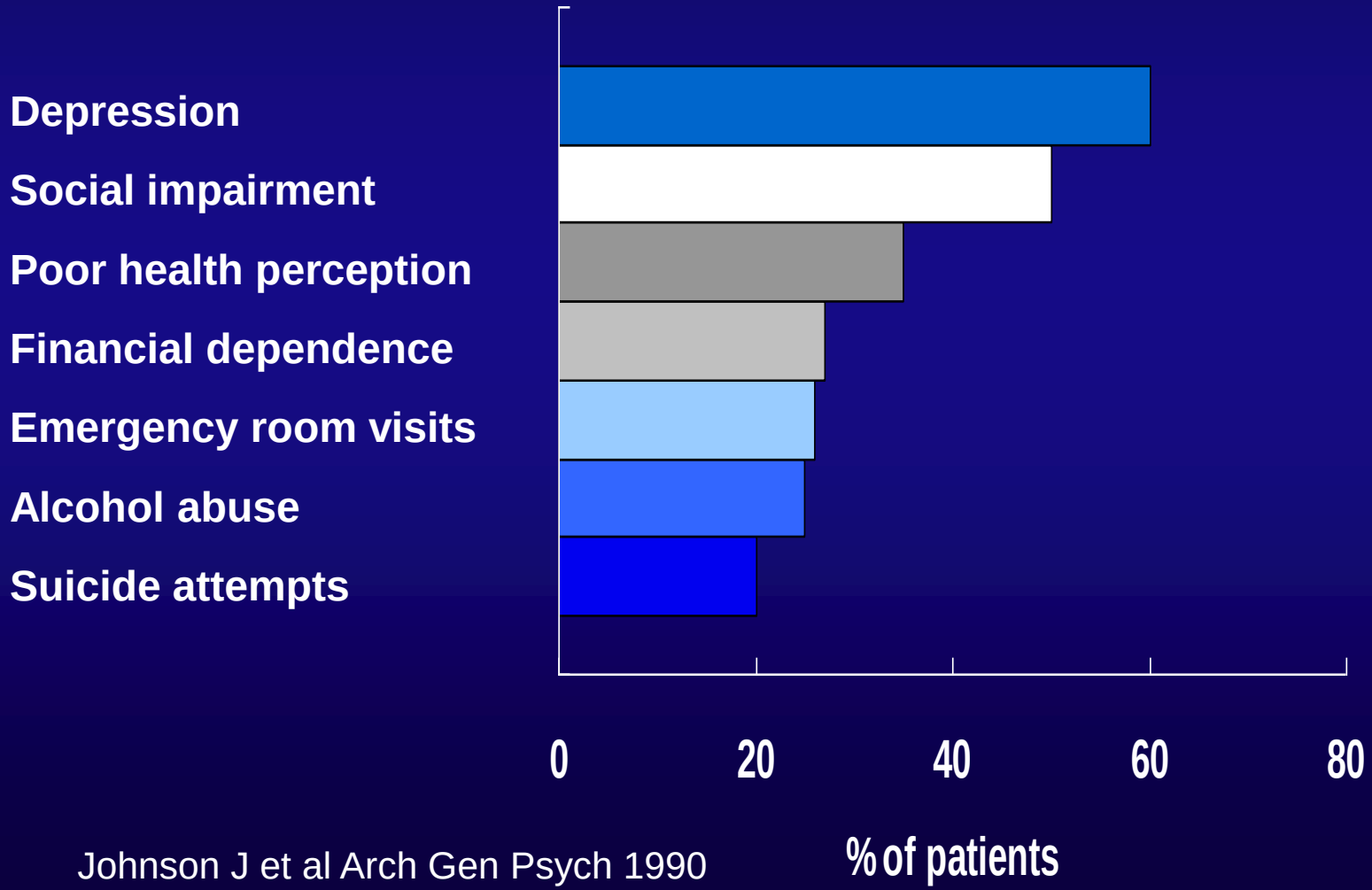
Emergency Room Visits
Percent Used Past Year



Weissman, 1991 ,Epidemiological Catchment Area (ECA) Survey

Morbidity of PD:

Epidemiological Catchment Area (ECA) Survey



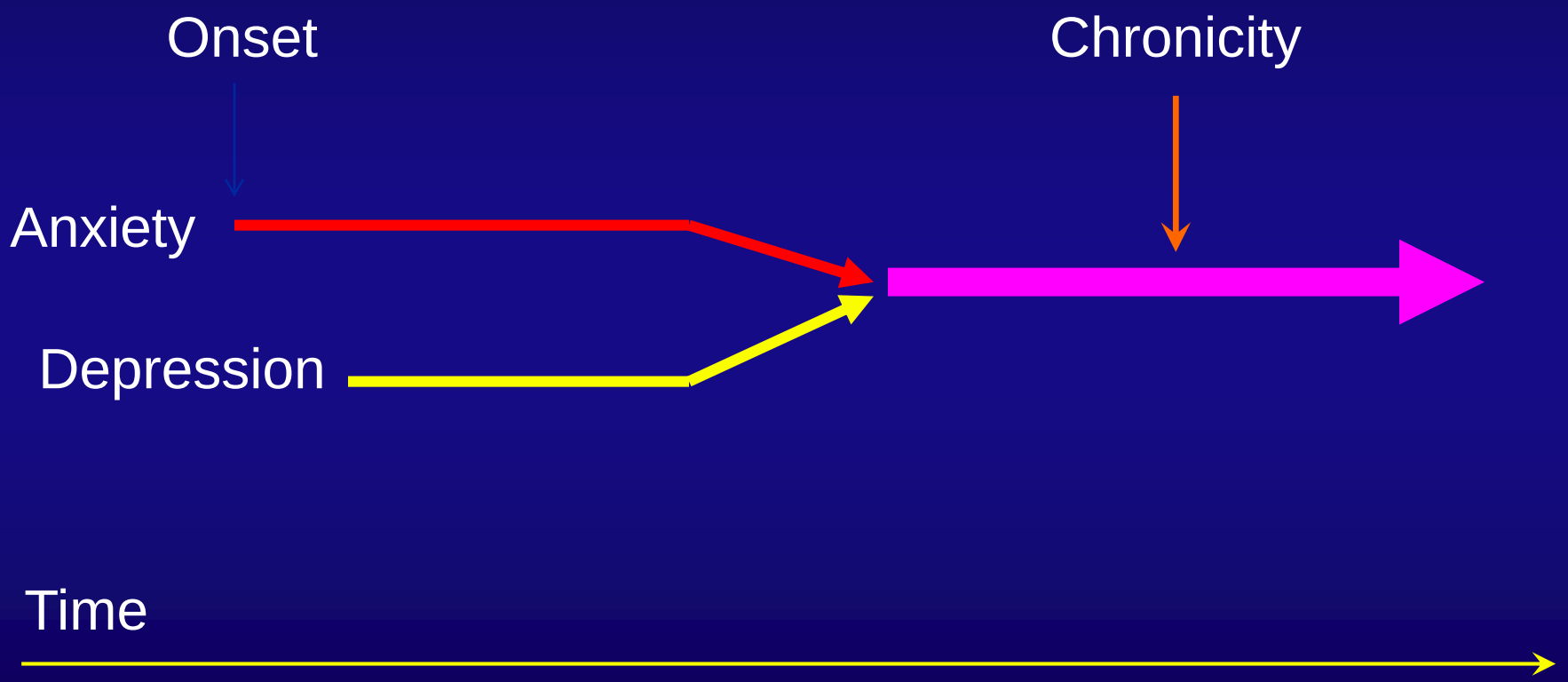
Johnson J et al Arch Gen Psych 1990

Physical and Emotional Function: Medical Illness Compared With Anxiety or Depression

SF-36 Scores	Physical Function	Role Physical	Pain	General Health	Energy	Social Function	Role Emotion	Mental Health
Diabetes Type II	Equal	Equal	More	More	More	More	More	More
Hyper-tension	Equal	More	More	More	More	More	More	More
Recent MI	Equal	Equal	More	More	More	More	More	More
CHF	Less	Less	Equal	Equal	More	More	More	More

Maki KM, et al. Psychosocial and work impairment of primary care patients with generalized anxiety disorder. Poster presented at: 156th Annual Meeting of the American Psychiatric Association; May 17-22, 2003; San Francisco, Calif.

Anxiety and Depression: Co-conspirators for Chronicity



Keller MB, Lydiard RB. *The Challenge of the Complex Clinical Course of Generalized Anxiety Disorder*. PsychCME Reports. January 2005:1-7; Yonkers KA, et al. *Br J Psychiatry*. 1996;168:308-313; Lydiard RB, MonnierJ, 2004. In: Heimber RG, et al, eds. *Generalized Anxiety Disorder: Advances in Research and Practice*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press; 2004: 351-379.

Psychiatric Comorbidity

- Up to 50% of all psychiatric disorders occur in individuals with current/prior psychiatric disorder
  - Mood-anxiety OR = 7.0
  - Anxiety-anxiety OR = 6.7
  - Mood-substance OR = 3.9
  - Anxiety-substance OR = 2.7

Kassier, 1995

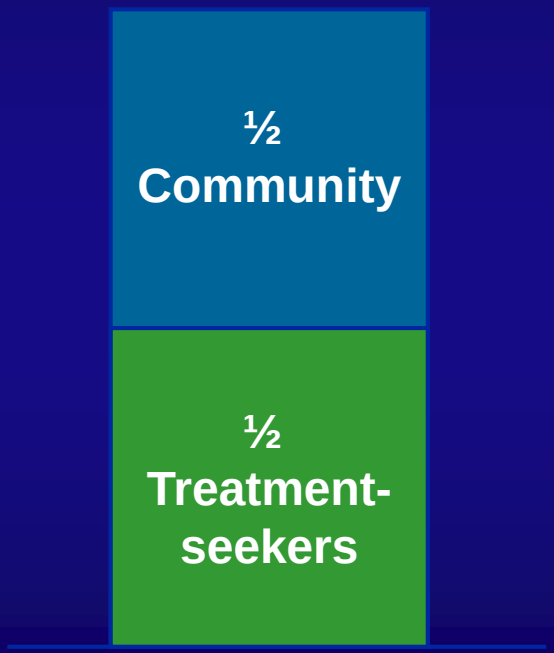
Anxiety : Increases Stress Vulnerability *and* Is a Stressor

- Anxiety and Depression-
- Meet criteria for stress:
  - Subjective perception of threat
  - Inability to control stressor

Schulkin J, et al. *Neurosci Biobehav Rev.* 1994;18:385-396.
McEwen BS. *N Engl J Med.* 1998;338:171-179.

WORRIED SICK:
Anxiety and Long-term Health

≈300 Individuals With GAD or Panic



2 to 6 times as many medical disorders vs. nonanxious*

- **Cardiovascular**
- **Respiratory**
- **Endocrine-metabolic**
- **Autoimmune disorders**

*Controlled for gender, depression, substance abuse.

Harter MC, et al. *Eur Arch Psychiatry Clin Neurosci.* 2003;253:313-320; McEwen BS. *Biol Psychiatry.* 2003;54:200-207.

Psychiatric Comorbidity

Co-existence of ≥ 2 Psychiatric Disorders

With each disorder, risk for more increases

Comorbidity: What do you see?

A face... Or the word **Liar?**

Comorbidity

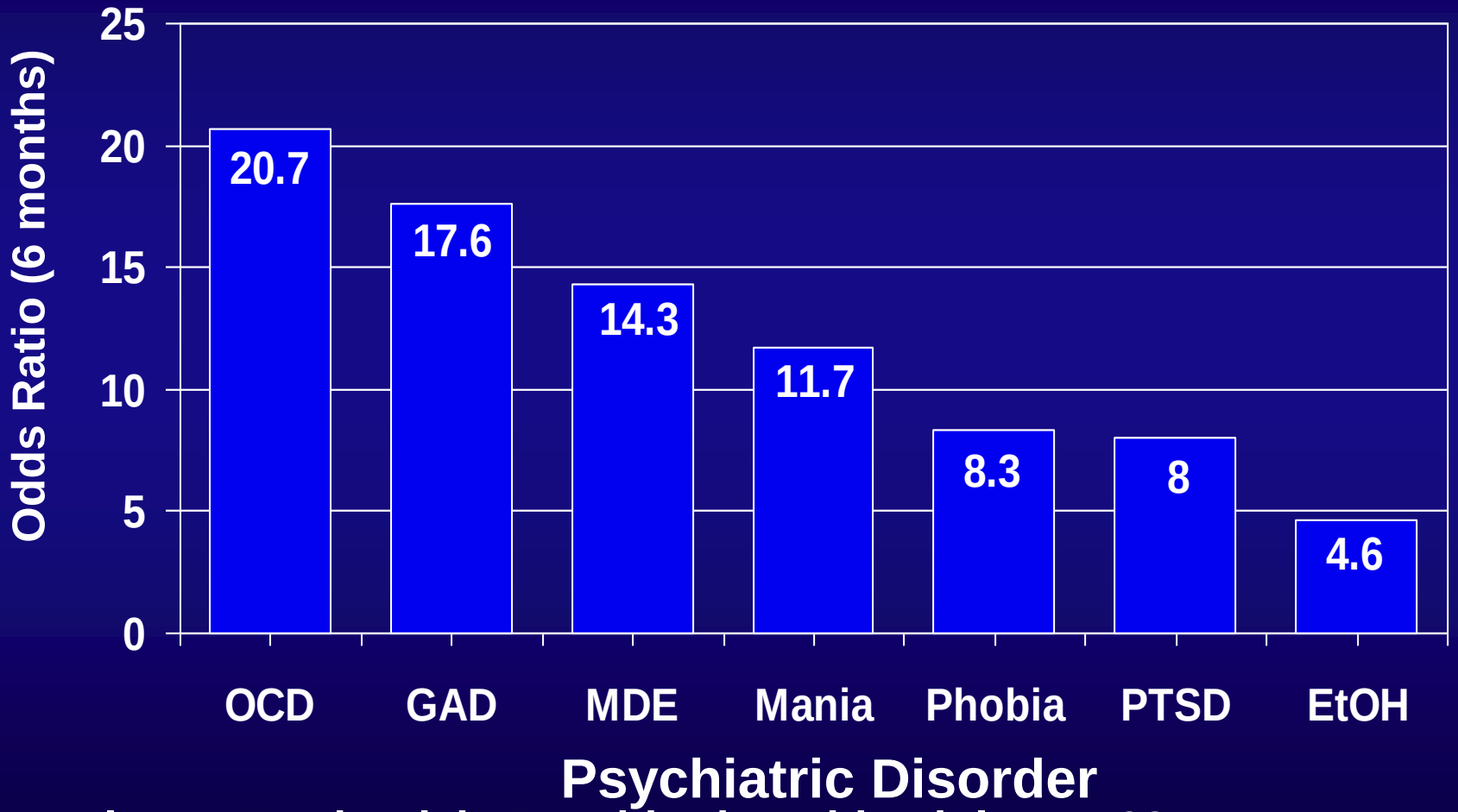
Comorbid Conditions Provide Important Clues

- Clinical characteristics and severity
- Course and outcome
- Treatment response

Nonrandom Association

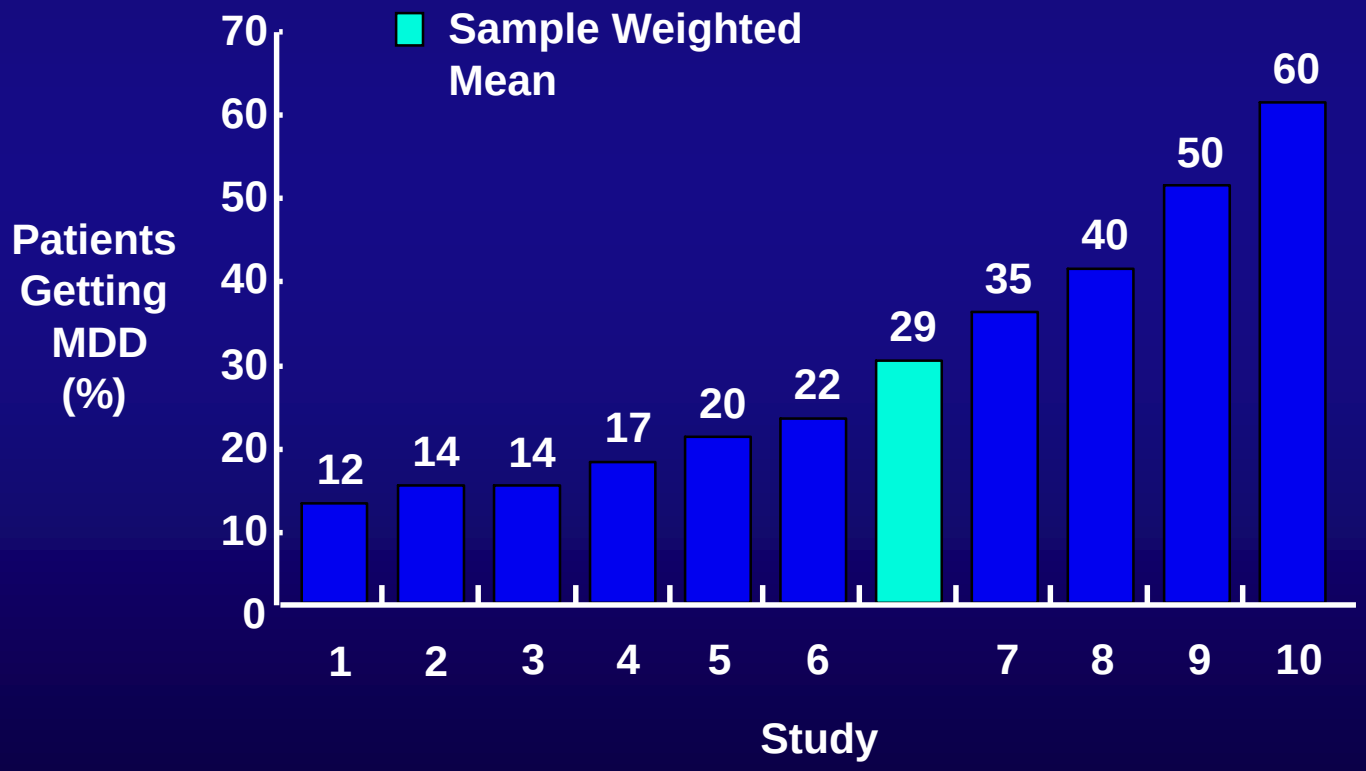
Panic Disorder

Increased Risk for Additional Psychiatric Disorders



Kessler, R. Textbook in Psychiatric Epidemiology, 1995

Development Of Major Depression In Panic Disorder (10 Studies, 2 Year Median Follow-Up)

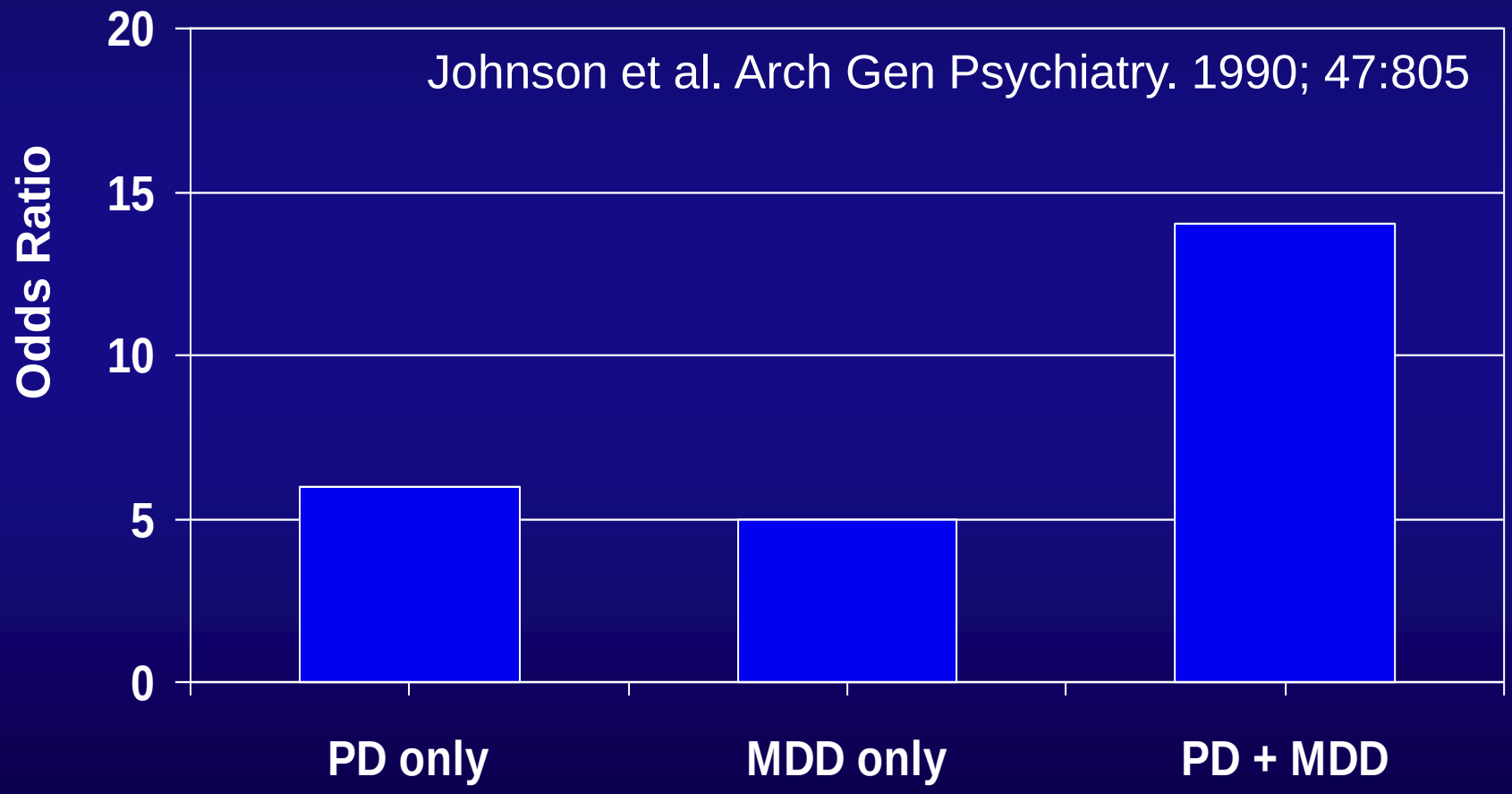


Roy-Byrne and Cowley. *Anxiety*. 1994/1995;1:151.

PD and Major Depression Clinical Characteristics

- Over 50% have Melancholia
- More Anxiety
- More Depression
- More Phobia
- Longer Course of Illness

Suicide Attempts

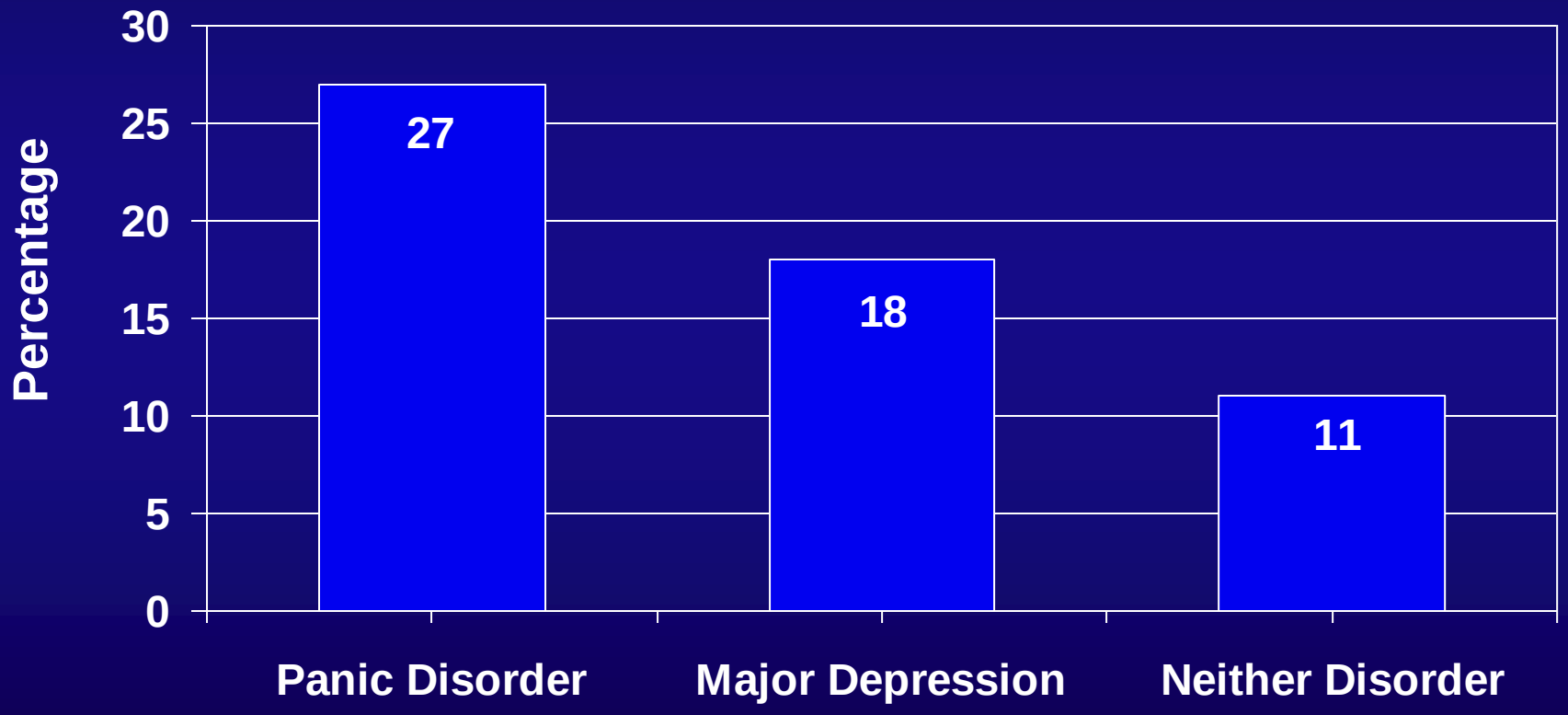


PD and Major Depression Long-Term Follow-Up

- More Psychosocial Impairment
  - Financial Assistance
  - Disability
- More Hospitalizations
- Poorer Overall Outcome

Von Valkenberg et al. J Affect Disord 1984; 6:627

Frequency of Alcohol Abuse by Diagnosis



Weissman, 1991, ECA data

Family History

- Panic and other anxiety disorders
- Depression
- Alcoholism
- Suicide
- Treatment and outcome results known

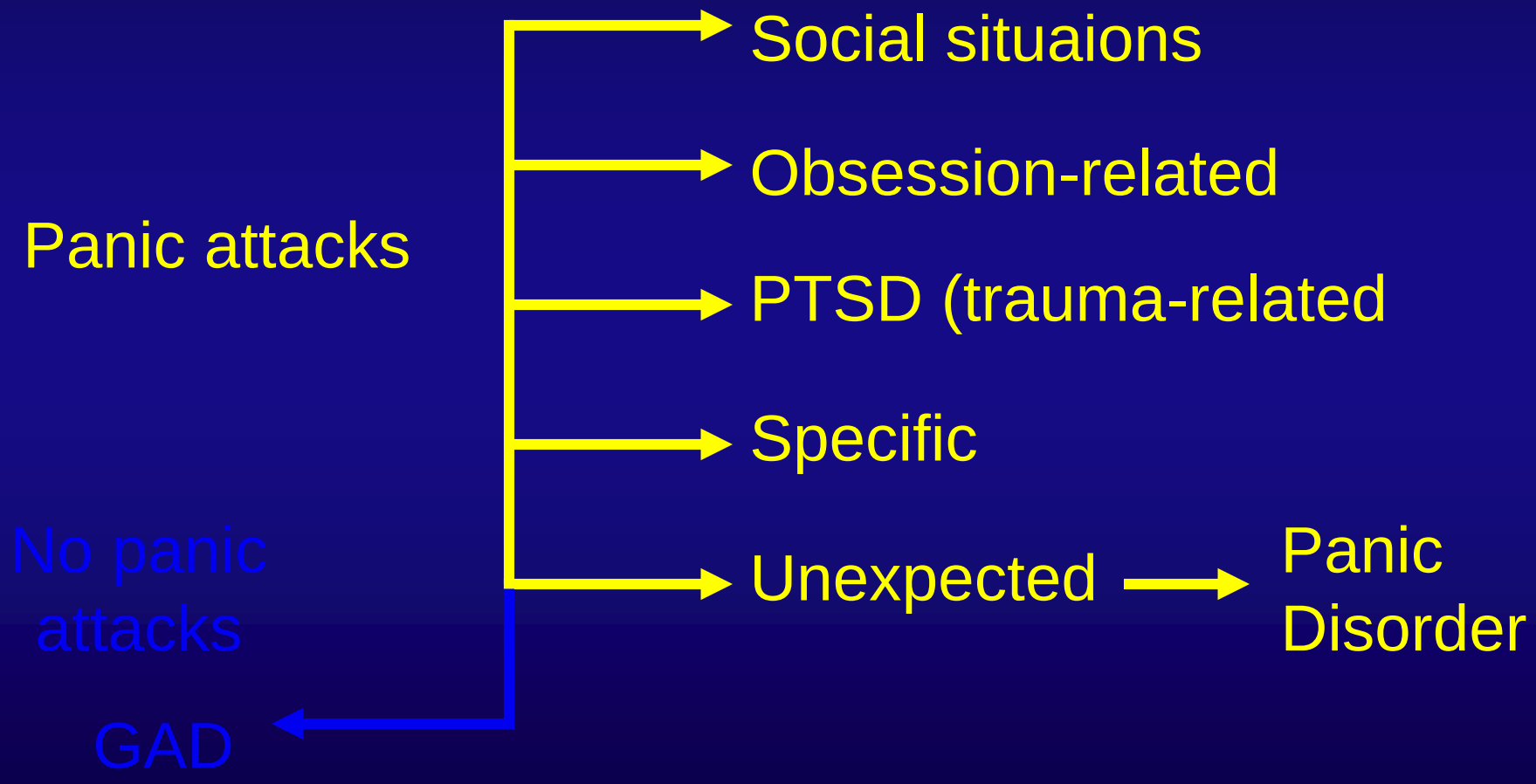
Panic Disorder

Evaluation

The Diagnosis?

- Assess panic attacks
  - What are Sx?
  - Unexpected vs. “cued” / stimulus-bound
  - How frequent and severe ?
- Cognitive distortion fo change ?
  - Fear of consequences or implications of PAs?
  - Are there lifestyle / behavioral changes?
- Avoidance due to fear of panic attacks?

Panic Attacks Differential Diagnosis



GAD=generalized anxiety disorder; PTSD=posttraumatic stress disorder.

Panic Disorder Differential Diagnosis

- Depression-Other comorbid disorders
- Different or Comorbid Anxiety disorder with PAs
- Substance Abuse
- Medical Condition
- Iatrogenic
- Other

Bruce et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 1992;49:867; ; Roy-Byrne and Uhde. *J Clin Psychiatry.* 1988;49:56 Strohle et al. *Acta Psychiatr Scand.* 1998;98:254; **Lydiard RB. In: *Textbook of Anxiety Disorders*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc; 2002:348-361**

Other Relevant History

- Reproductive status/sexual functioning
  - pregnancy
  - planned pregnancy
- Changes in Important Relationships
  - Can enhance compliance with treatment
  - “Safe person”
- Assess for Occupational, Social, Family Role Impairment

Medical Conditions

(Conditions with significant PD overlap)

- Chronic Pain Syndromes
- Mitral valve prolapse
- Migraine
- Chronic Fatigue
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- Chronic fatigue syndrome
- Dizziness
- Hyperventilation syndrome
- Premenstrual syndrome

Medical Evaluation of PD

History

- Complete description of physical symptoms
- Medical history
- Family history
- Drug and medication history

Medical Evaluation of PD

- Physical Examination
- EKG
- Laboratory
  - CBC
  - Electrolytes, BUN, Creatinine, Glucose
  - Urinalysis
  - T_4 and TSH

Indicators for Further Medical Evaluation

- **Panic attacks clearly and consistently related in time to meals**
- **Loss of consciousness**
- **Seizures, amnestic episodes**
- **Symptoms similar to panic attacks but without the intense fear or sense of impending doom (non-fear panic attacks)**
- **Unresponsiveness to treatment**
- **Real vertigo**

PD: Patient Approach

Don’t panic, doctor--this only *feels* like an emergency

- **Positive diagnosis is critical; they were told there was nothing wrong.**
- **Relieve the patient of perceived failure to overcome alone; discuss inherited risk**
  - **“It’s not your fault--anyone would feel like you do if they had panic attacks.”**
  - **“You have had a normal human response to terrifying symptoms. They are frightening but not dangerous.”**

[1]Hirshfeld DR et al. Panic disorder and its treatment., New York:Marcel Dekker,1998:93-152; **Lydiard RB. In Textbook of Anxiety Disorders. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc; 2002:348-361.**

PD: Patient Approach *(cont.)*

- **Patient Education**
- **Disease *management* is the goal like diabetes or asthma**
- **Immediately and repeatedly re-frame attacks as ‘Distressing but not medically dangerous.’**
- **Include significant other or family to enhance legitimacy of PD**

PD: Patient Approach *(cont.)*

- **Be patient**
  - Repeat as needed
- **Be thorough, credible and realistic**
  - Outline a plan and pattern of improvement expected
  - Same as order of symptom onset relief (panic attack→phobia)
  - Time frame for getting better vs. back to normal

PD: Patient Approach *(cont.)*

- Address medication treatment duration as soon as it presents
  - Doctor, how long will I need to take the medicine?
- Re-frame treatment as a way to be independent, not dependent
- Eyeglasses example:
  - Do you expect that your eyes ‘learn’ to see after a few months?
  - Are you worried that you will become addicted to them?

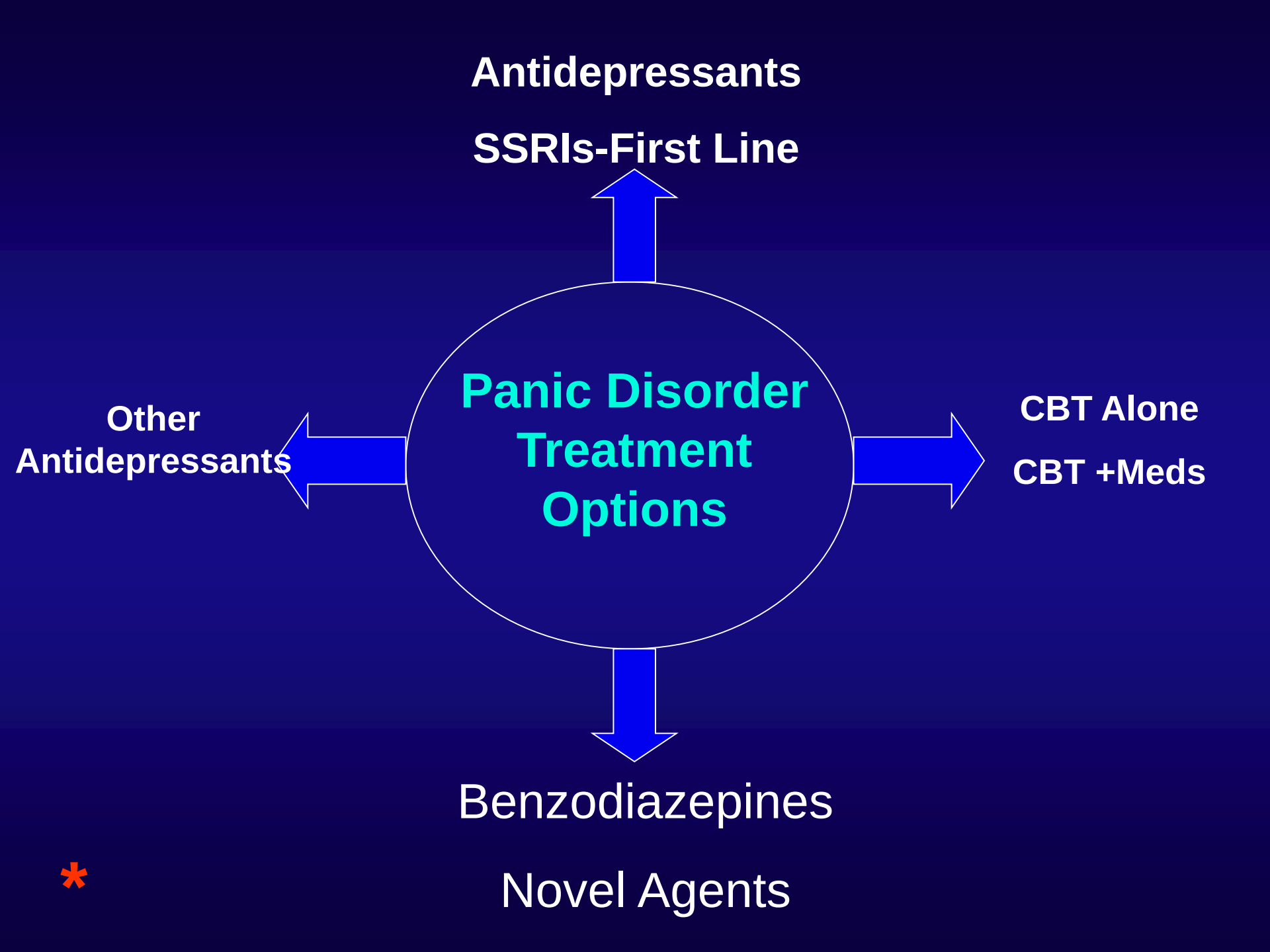
PD: Patient Approach *(cont.)*

- Collaborative approach promotes less perceived threat and lack of control
- Map out “the plan”, document treatment
  - usual dose needed, necessary duration, how you will deal with possible adverse effects
- Give the patient some control
  - You: “I will help you steer the car, but you will control the gas pedal as we drive toward our goal. We will get there eventually.”

[1]Hirshfeld DR et al. Panic disorder and its treatment., New York:Marcel Dekker,1998:93-152; Lydiard RB. In Textbook of Anxiety Disorders. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc; 2002:348-361.

PD: Patient Approach *(cont.)*

- **Initial Goals to Outline**
  - Reduce and stop unexpected attacks (unexpected)
  - Situationally bound attacks
  - Fearful anticipation
  - Fearful (phobic) avoidance
  - Distorted, catastrophic cognitions


Antidepressants
SSRIs-First Line
Other Antidepressants
Panic Disorder Treatment Options
CBT Alone
CBT +Meds
Benzodiazepines
Novel Agents
*

Outcome Assessment

- *Functional status is key issue !!*
- Panic attacks least useful measure
  - They don't correlate with other domains
- Symptoms to target and follow
  - Phobic avoidance
  - Cognitive distortion
  - Depression
  - Somatic symptoms

*

The Fear Circuit Model

- Explanation for both CBT and Pharmacotherapy

*

Brain Circuits in Anxiety Disorders

- Neurocircuits:
  - **Interconnected brain regions that exchange information to perform a specific function.**
- Amygdala:
  - **Subcortical structure serving as the "central hub" in fear processing.**
- Cortico-Striatal-Thalamic-Cortical (CSTC) Pathways:
  - **Closed loops originating in the frontal cortex which sequentially process specific types of information about emotion, cognition or behavior.**

*

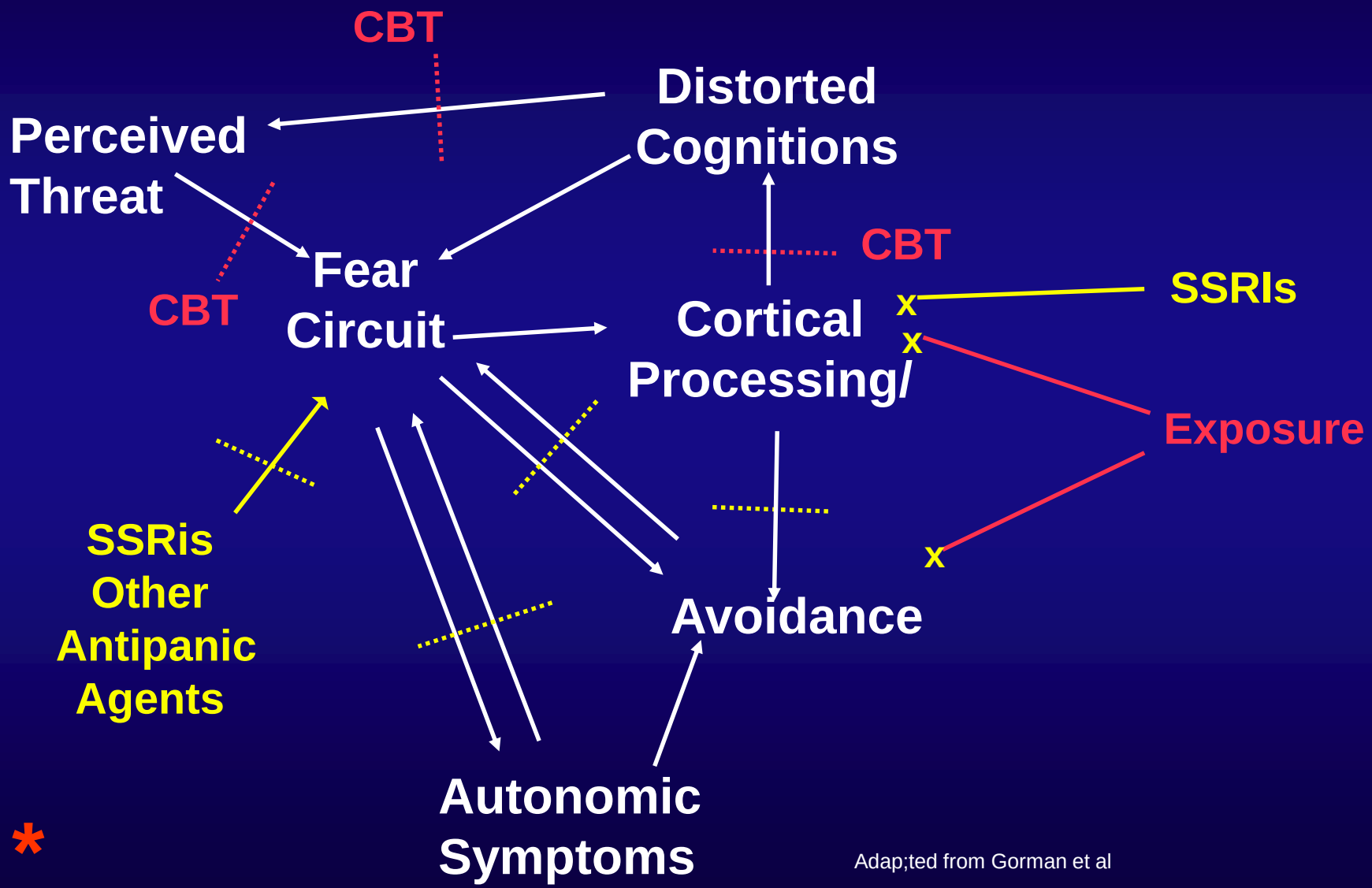
The Fear Circuit

- HPA Axis activation by amygdala
  - Triggers stress response
    - Autonomic-neuroendocrine-immune function
- Hippocampus
  - Storage and retrieval of contextual personal memory
- Amygdala- "Alarm" button
  - -Hub of Fear Circuit
  - Conditioned fear encoded

- Prefrontal Cortex
  - Coping and problem solving, fear conditioning
  - Probability estimation

*

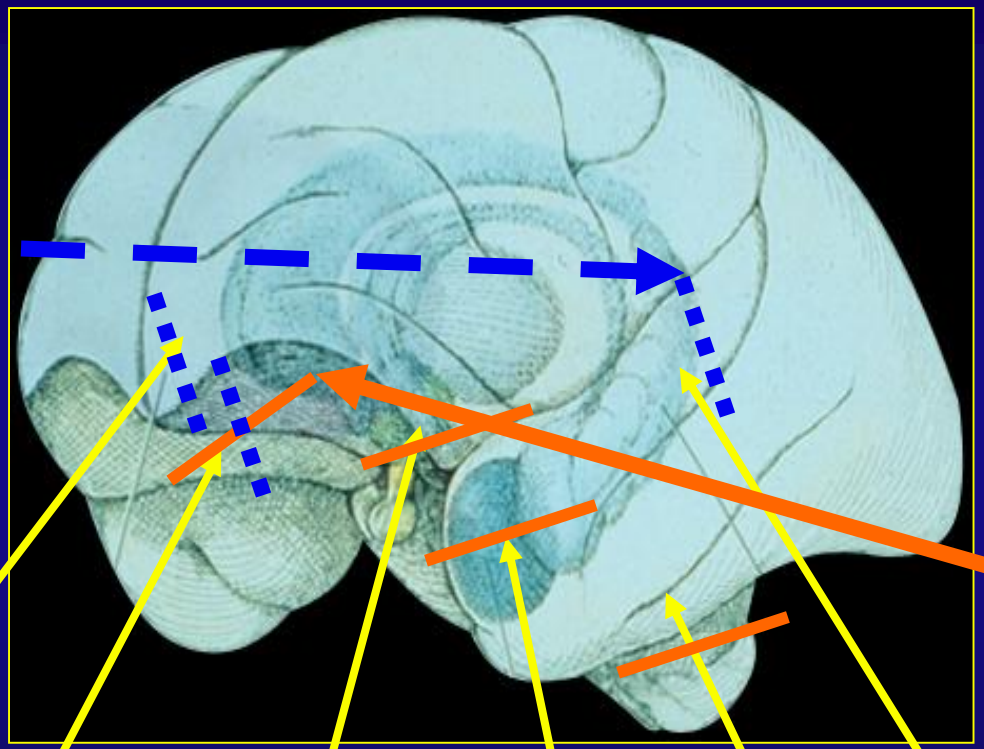
Theoretical Sites of Action of Antipanic Treatment(s)



*

Adap;ted from Gorman et al

Model of Sites of Action for Psychotropics and CBT



CBT
(Top-Down)

Psychotropic
Agents
(Bottom-Up)

Prefrontal
Cortex

Hippocampus

Hypothalamus

Amygdala

Cingulate
Cortex

Locus Ceruleus, NTS, Others

*

NTS = nucleus tractus solitarius

Clinical Response in Panic

- Unexpected Panic -anticipatory anxiety>-- cognitive -->agoraphobia
  - Reverse of order of onset
- Time Frame-Varies Significantly
  - 2-6 weeks-unexpected PA subside
  - 8-12 weeks-Cued panic, anticipatory anxiety
  - 8-? Weeks-Agoraphobic avoidance

*

CBT: Pros and Cons

- **Advantages**
  - It works (70%–85% efficacy)
  - It may have low relapse rate when discontinued
  - Most people like it
  - Time-limited
  - Overall low price
  - Few adverse effects
- **Disadvantages**
  - Harder to administer than medication
  - Limited availability
  - More effort than taking medication
  - Lack of third-party coverage
  - Not all patients willing or able
    - Cognitively impaired
    - Severe disorders

American Psychiatric Association. *Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Panic Disorder*. 1998; Ballenger. *Biol Psychiatry.* 1999;46:1579; Fava et al. *Br J Psychiatry.* 1995;166:87.

CBT for PD

- Based upon empirical evidence for fear of bodily sensations in panic disorder
- Target 1: Decrease physical sensations
  - Technique: Breathing retraining
- Target 2: Interrupt catastrophic misinterpretation of bodily sensations
  - `Technique:Cognitive restructuring
- Target 3 Decrease conditioned fear of bodily sensations
  - Technique Interoceptive exposure
- Target 4: Exposure to feared situations
  - Technique-Hierarchy least to most feared, in that order

Treatment: General Principles

- SSRIs or *SNRI First Line
  - Other ADs work
  - MAOIs
  - Benzodiazepines
    - Not reliably antidepressant
  - Beta-blockers useful adjunctive Rx
    - Not adequate as monotherapy

* SNRIs more expensive, less-well studied in PD

*

Efficacy of PD Pharmacotherapy

Agents/ Classes with Proven Efficacy*

PD	GAD	SAD	PTSD
SSRIs	SSRIs	SSRIs/SNRIs	SSRIs
BZD	BZD	BZD*	MAOIs
TCAs	TCAs	MAOIs	TCAs
MAOIs	Buspirone	Clomipramine	
Venlafaxine	Trazodone	Gabapentin*	
	Venlafaxine		

•Not reliably antidepressant or insufficient information

*Consideration includes comorbid disorders

Not all agents in all classes approved by FDA but all empirically supported in RCTs;

*

Adapted from: Lydiard RB. *Textbook of Anxiety Disorders*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc; 2002:348-361.

Therapies With Limited or No Proven Efficacy in PD

PD	GAD	SAD	PTSD
AEDs*	AEDs	AEDs	AEDs
± Bupropion	Atypical NLs	Bupropion	Atypical NLs
Buspirone (adjunct)	Mirtazapine	*CMI- but not other TCAs*	Bupropion
Mirtazapine			Buspirone
			Mirtazapine
			TCAs
			Trazodone
			Venlafaxine

*AEDs-antiepileptics-gabapentin. topiramate . levetiracetam
NL= neuroleptic

Adapted from: Lydiard RB. In: *Textbook of Anxiety Disorders*. Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc; 2002:348-3613.

*

Adverse Effects of PD Pharmacotherapy

SSRIs, Novel ADs	Activation , sexual dysfunction, weight gain
Benzodiazepines	Not antidepressant , physiologic dependence/ potential withdrawal, initial coordination , sedation, fear of addiction
TCAs	Limited breadth of efficacy, activation, cardiovascular adverse effects , overdose danger
MAOIs	Diet / drug interaction, postural hypotension, hyposomnia, weight gain, sexual dysfunction, overdose danger

*

Selection Considerations

- Evidence for efficacy
  - Historical success in that pt
- Safety
- Tolerability
- Half-life
- Drug-drug interactions
- Protein binding

*

PD
Medications That Don't Work

- Bupropion (Wellbutrin)
- Trazodone (Desyrel)
- Buspirone (Buspar)
- Neuroleptics*
  - Some evidence for atypical neuroleptics
- Beta-blockers

*

PD: SSRIs -First Line" *

- Efficacy ~ 50-70% for each SSRI
- Different patients may respond to different SSRIs
  - Try ≥ two SSRIs before switching class
- Initial dose = 1/4 to 1/2 initial antidepressant dose- (or less!)
  - Fruit Juice ("Cran-zac", "Applezac"), water, applesauce to allow small initial dose
- Final dose may be more than 2x antidepressant dose

*

*APA Treatment Guidelines

SSRIs for PD: Advantages

- Wide safety margin
- Relatively low side effect profile
- Broad spectrum of mood and anxiety efficacy
- No significant cardiovascular effects
- No or minimal anti-cholinergic effects

*

SSRIs For PD: Disadvantages

- May have delayed onset
- Initial activation
- Sexual side effects -25-60%
- Weight gain over 3-12 months in small but clinically significant subgroup

*

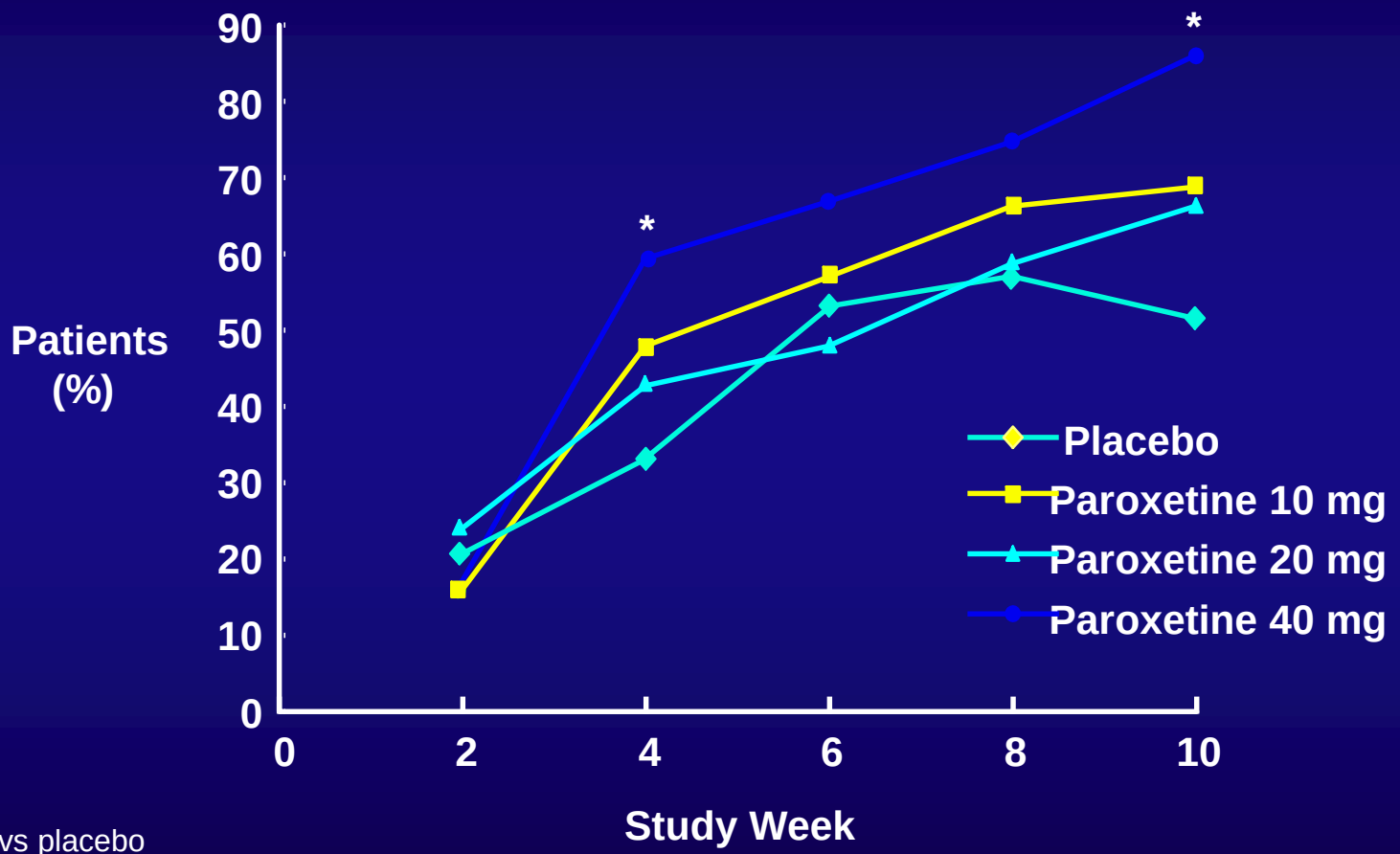
SSRIs

- Initial dose
  - (25–50% antidepressant dose)
    - Sertraline 12.5–25 mg
    - Paroxetine 10–20 mg
    - Fluoxetine 5–10 mg
    - Fluvoxamine 25–50 mg
    - Citalopram 10–20 mg
    - Escitalopram 5-10
- Effective antidepressant dosage level may be higher

*

Percent Patients Attaining Panic-Free Status Paroxetine Fixed-Dose Study

The 40 mg dose was statistically better than placebo. 10 and 20 mg were not, but were effective for many--no one dose dose is THE dose for 'all patients

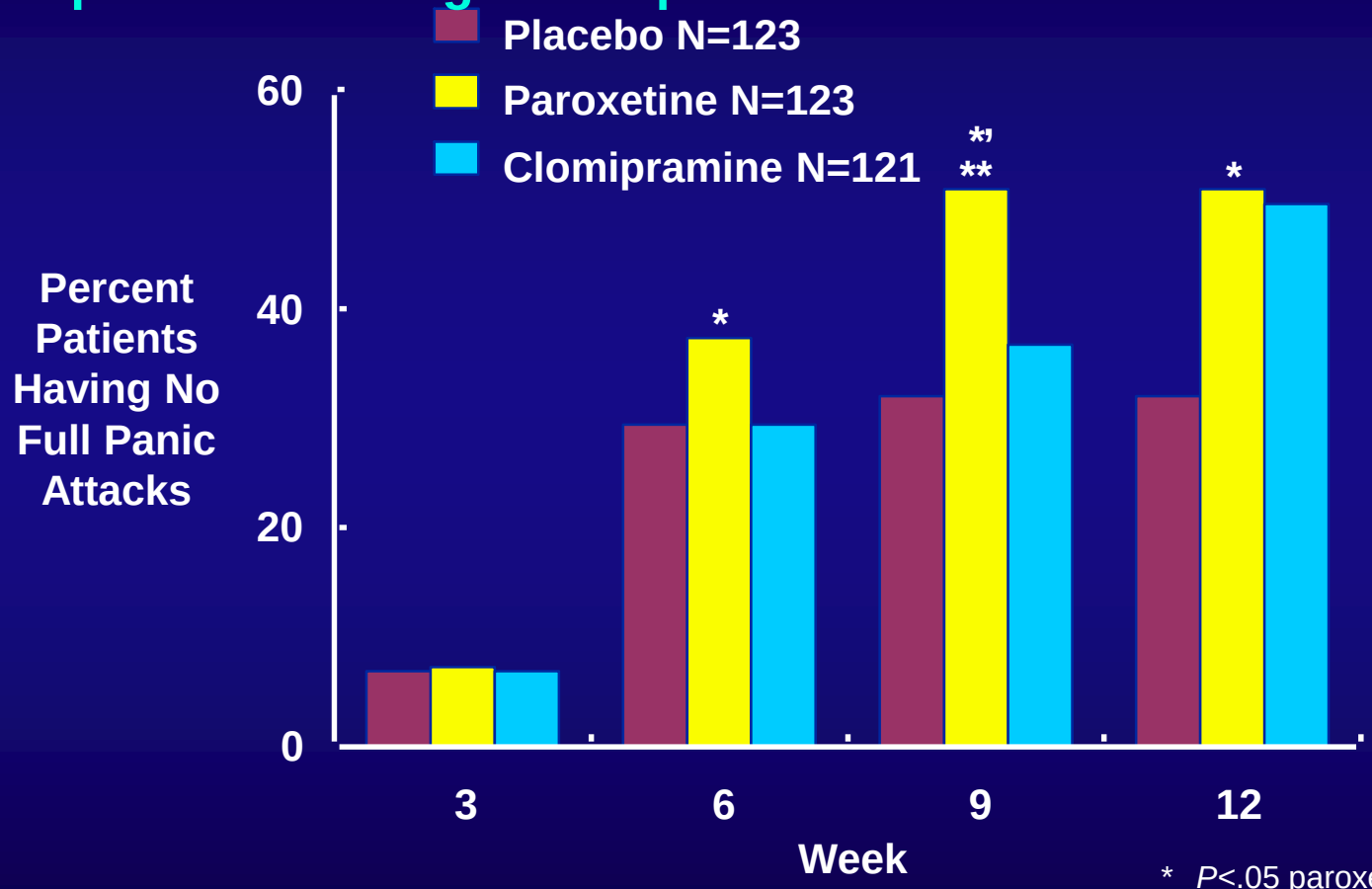


**P*<.019 vs placebo

Ballenger et al. *Am J. Psychiatry*1998; 155:36-42

Paroxetine vs Clomipramine† Treatment Of PD

CMI patients had higher dropout rates due to side effects

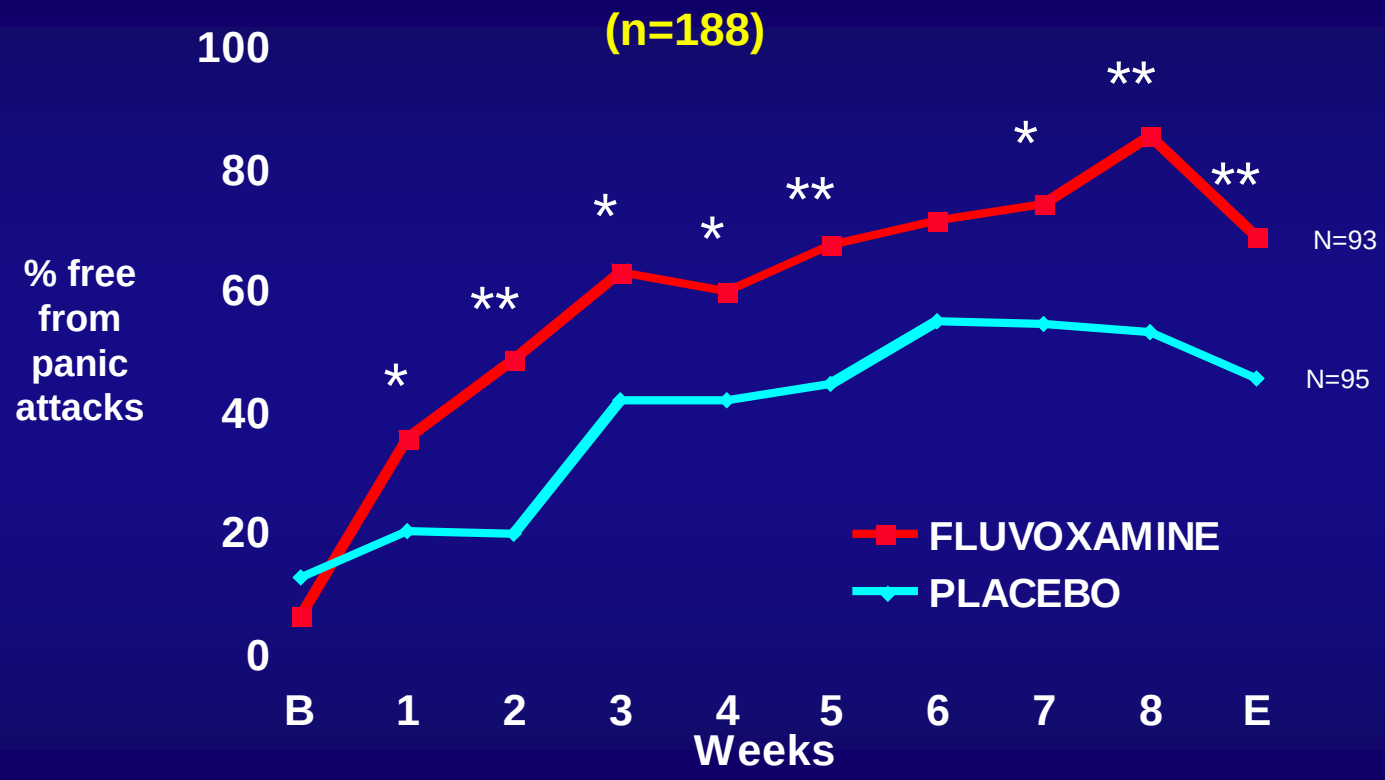


* *P*<.05 paroxetine vs placebo.

** *P*<.05 paroxetine vs clomipramine. Lecrubier et al Acta Psychiatrica Scand 1995; 95:145-152

†Not indicated for treatment of panic disorder in US.

Fluvoxamine vs Placebo
% Free from Panic Attacks

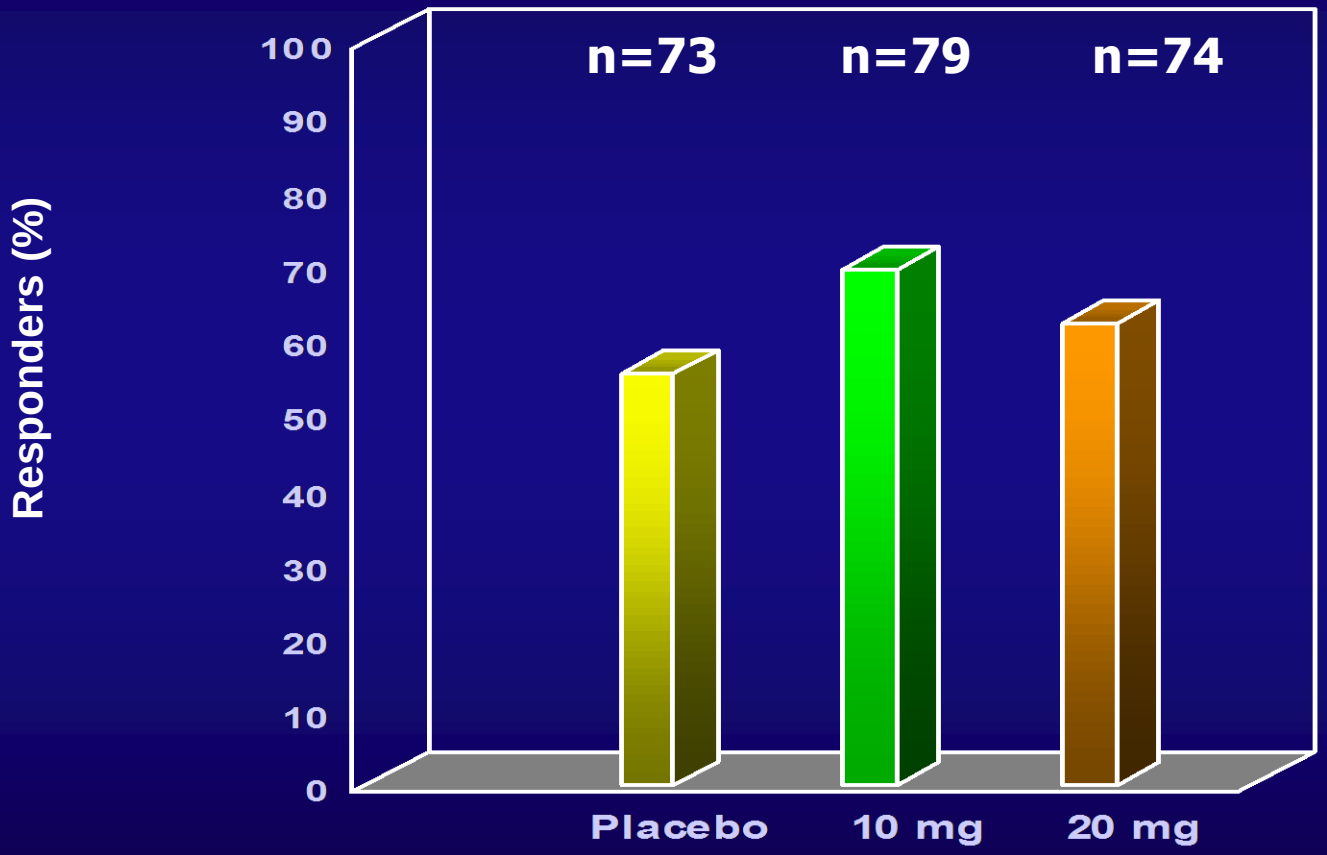


* p < 0.05*; *p < 0.01 vs placebo

Asnis et al, Psychiatry Res. 2001 Aug 5;103(1):1-14..

*

Panic Disorder: 10 Weeks' Treatment
Fluoxetine 10 or 20 mg vs Placebo: CGI Responders

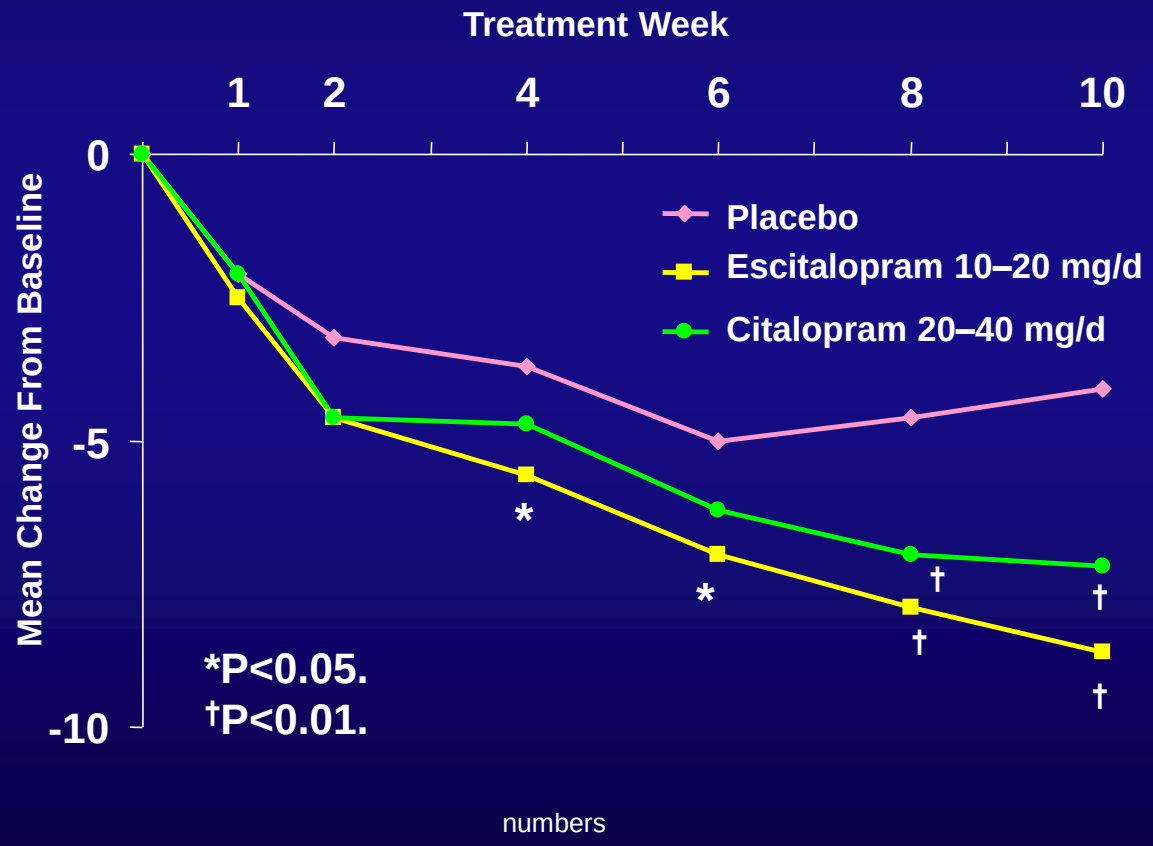


*

Michelson D, Lydiard RB, Pollack MH, Tamura RN, Hoog SL, Tepner R, Demitrack MA, & Tollefson GD. *Am J Psychiatry* 1998; 11: 1570-77.

Escitalopram Treatment of Panic Disorder

Panic and Agoraphobia Scale



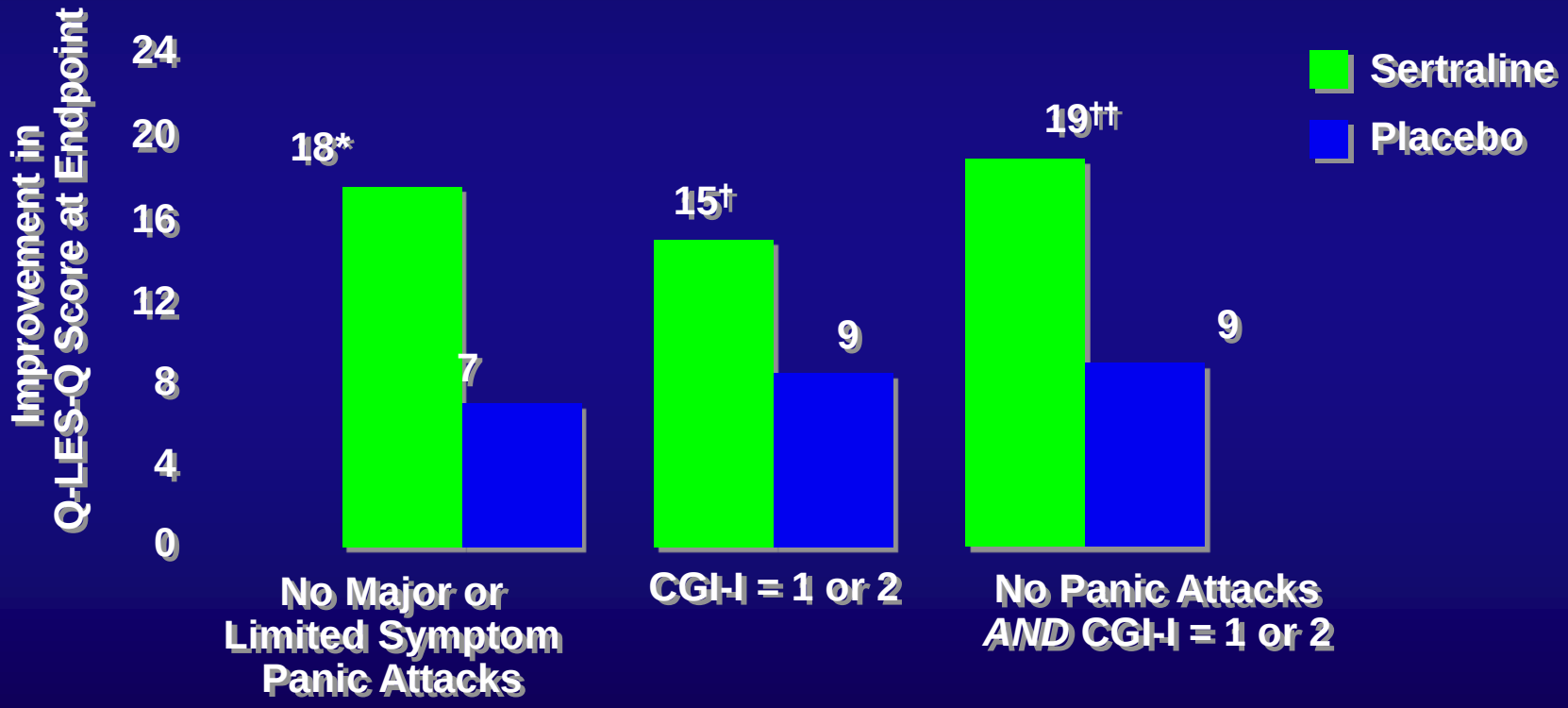
numbers

*

Stahl, SM et al APA, 2002

Quality of Life Measures- A Better Way to Assess Outcome?

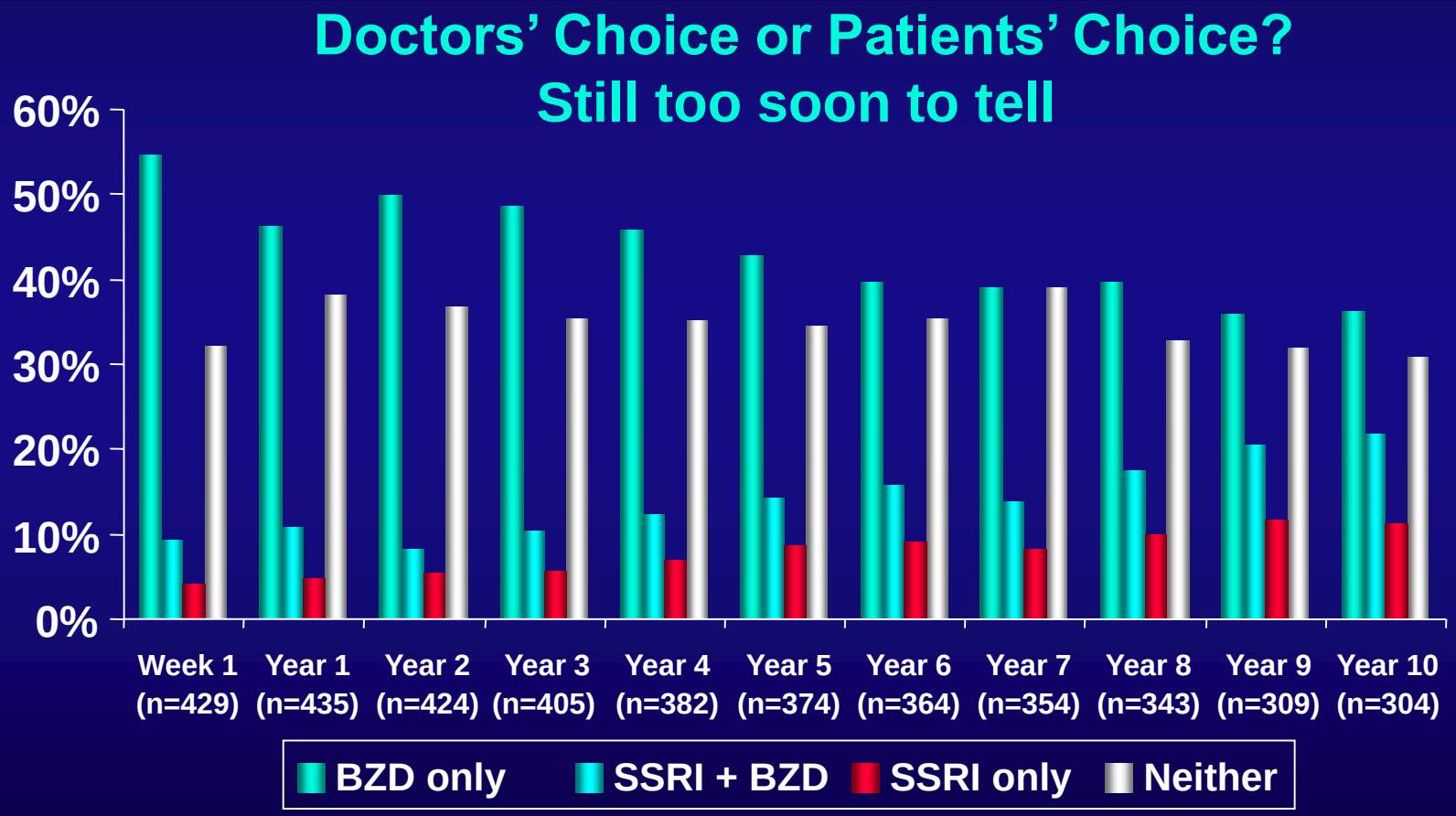
Sertraline Responders Report Significantly More Quality of Life Improvement Than Do Placebo Responders



Pairwise Comparison of Adjusted Mean Change Scores:
* $P<0.001$ † $P<0.007$ †† $P<0.003$
Rapaport et al., 1998

*

Long-term Pharmacotherapy Received by PD Patients (1989–2001)



*

Bruce SE et al. Am J Psych 2003l 160:: 1432-8; BZD= benzodiazepines

TCAs: Advantages

- Antidepressant
- Volume of clinical experience
- Imipramine Rx--[imipramine + desipramine] ≥ 100 ng/ml likely effective for many patients

*

TCAs: Disadvantages

- Delayed onset of action
- Significant side effects burden
  - Weight gain
  - Sexual dysfunction 25-40%
- Anticholinergic effects
- Cardiotoxicity
- Danger with overdose
- Not useful for social anxiety disorder

*

Antidepressant Discontinuation

- Gradual taper (≥ 2 months)
- Properties of agent affect timing and severity of discontinuation Sx
  - Shorter t 1/2 -earlier
  - No active metabolite-earlier
  - Extended release formulation does not protect

*

Discontinuation/Withdrawal Symptoms Following SSRI Treatment

- Anxiety/agitation
- Light-headedness
- Insomnia
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Headache
- Sensory disturbance

*

Zajecka et al. J Clin Psychiatry 1997;58:291.

Benzodiazepines: Advantages

- Effective
- Rapid onset
- Tolerability
- Safety

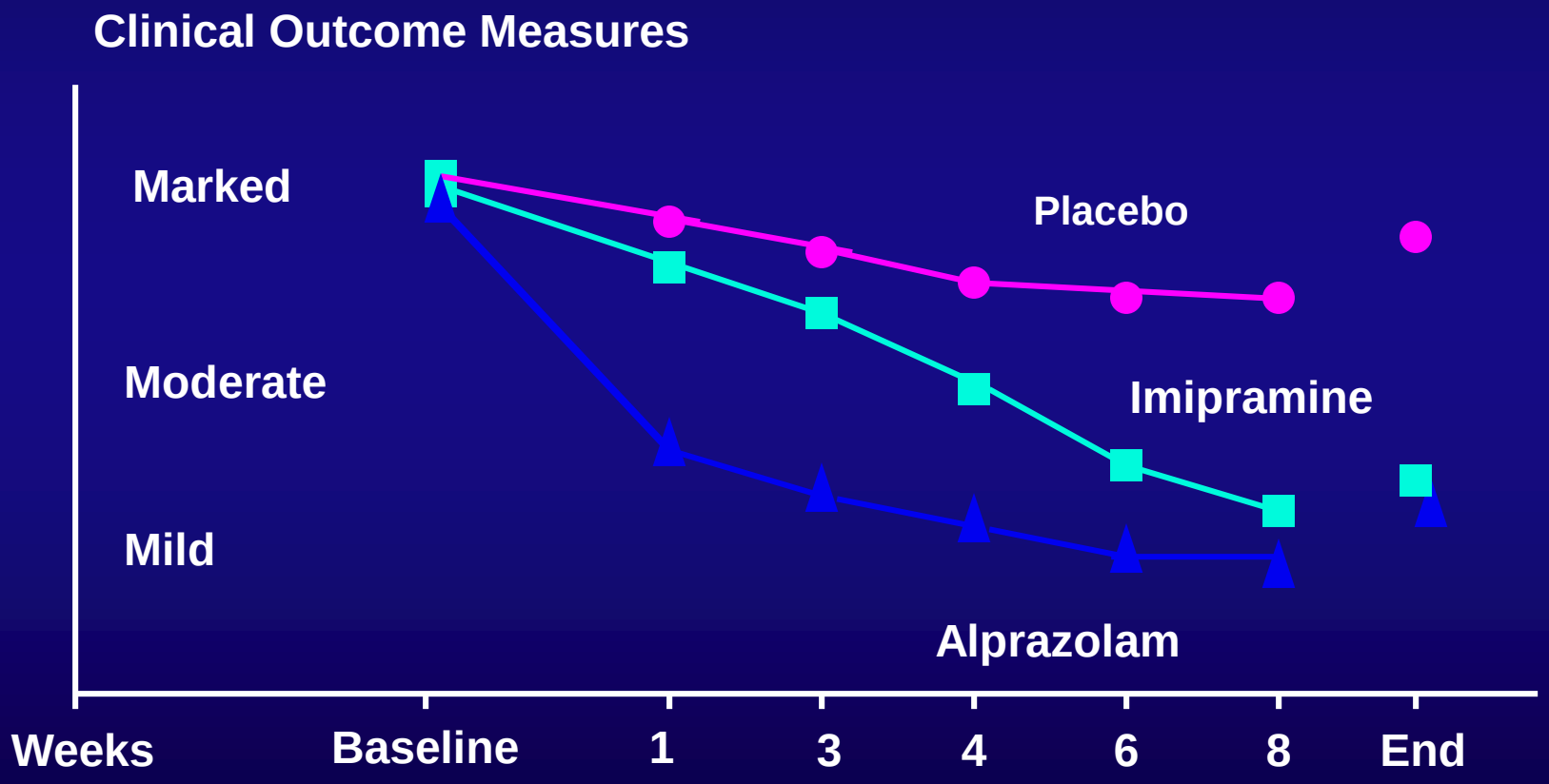
*

Benzodiazepines: Disadvantages

- Not antidepressant
- Physiologic dependence
- Sedation and coordination problems
  - (2 - 4 weeks)
- Subjective memory loss
  - Inconsistent empirical evidence

*

Comparative Efficacy of Alprazolam, Imipramine, and Placebo (N=1080)*



*

Cross-National Panic Disorder Study, Br J Psychiatry

Benzodiazepines: Long-Term Follow-up

- 60 PD patients
- 2.5 year average follow up
- Alprazolam Rx + behavioral group
- 18 (30%) discontinued
- 36 (60%) lower dose
- 3 (5%) same dose
- 3 (5%) increased dose

*

Nagy et al, *AGP* 1989;46:993

Polypharmacy

- Benzodiazepines
  - Jitteriness, anticipatory anxiety, insomnia
- Beta Blockers
  - Tremor, palpitations, sweating
- Bupropion
  - Sexual side effects

*

Definition of Response

- **Symptoms**
  - **Panic attacks: at least 50% decrease**
  - **Other PD symptoms clearly much or very much improved (anticipatory anxiety, phobic symptoms)**
- **Time frame**
  - **to response: 6-12 weeks**
  - **of response: 4 -8 weeks**

*

Definition Remission

- Full recovery of pre-morbid functioning
- Full relief of symptoms
- No panic attacks (or not more than 1 mild one in a 4-8 week period)
- No clinically significant anxiety
- No clinically significant phobic symptoms
- Lasting remission may be elusive due to undulating course of illness

*

Inadequate or Non-response

- Identify element (s) unimproved
  - Panic attacks, avoidance, anticipatory anxiety, depression
- Medication dose and duration inadequate?
  - No-->Increase?
  - Yes-->Augment?
  - Yes-->Change?
- All adequate?-->Add CBT
- Reconsider diagnosis

*

Who needs Long-term Treatment?

- The majority of patients need long-term Rx
- Relapse rates after discontinuation of medication significant
  - -60% within 3-4 months after stopping meds*
  - CBT may assist in successful discontinuation
- Tapering medication should be very gradual and correlate with duration of treatment (2-6 months**)

*Relapse may be higher for BZ monotherapy

**Optimal taper may be longer after long-term BZ

*

Effective Long-term Treatments for Panic

- SSRIs and other antidepressants
  - Preferred for long-term treatment
- Benzodiazepines
  - Monotherapy effective; risk for emergent depression
- Novel agents (anticonvulsants)
- CBT
- Combination

*

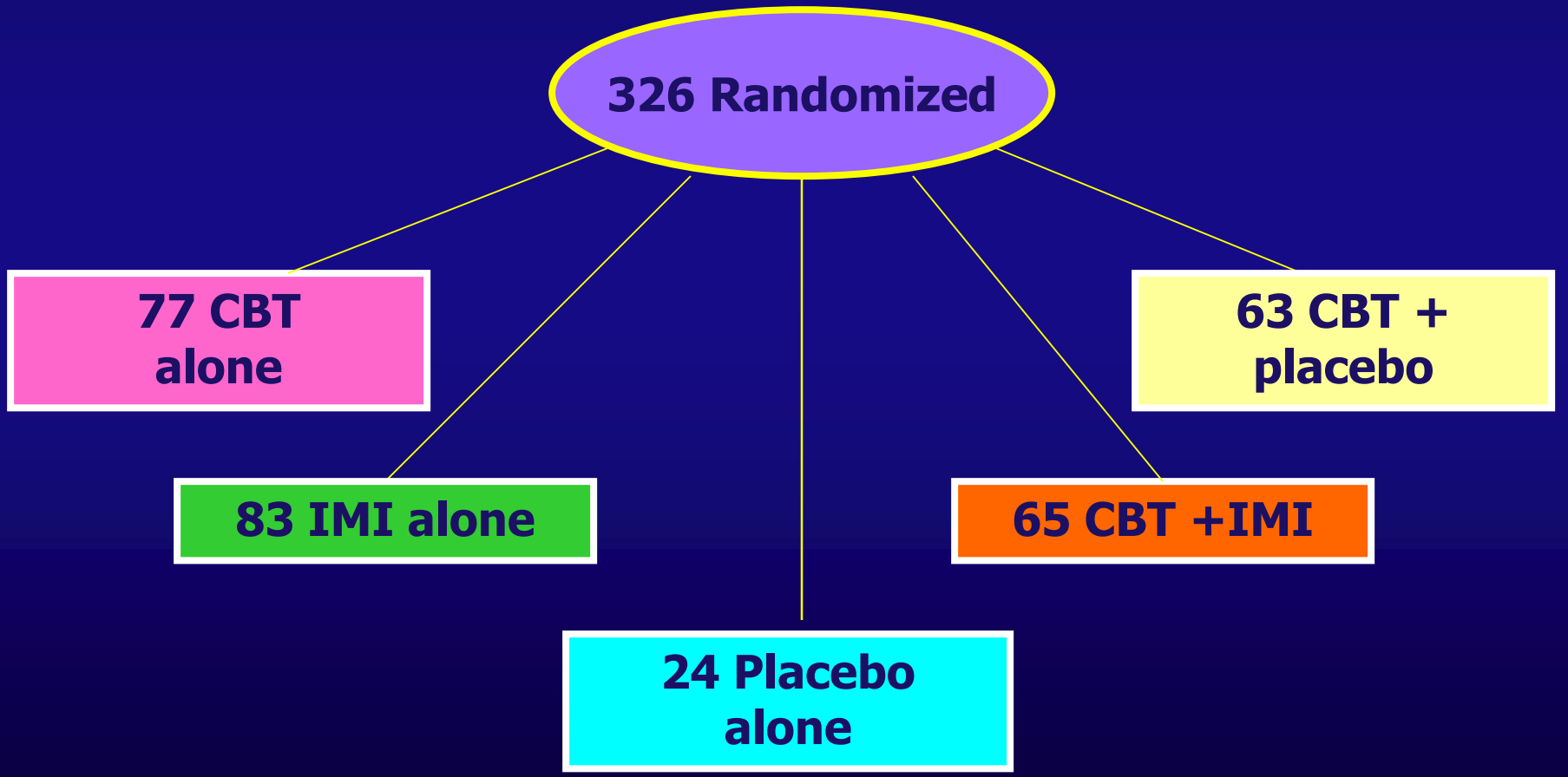
Combination Treatments

Meds + CBT

Meds + Meds

CBT, IMI or CBT +IMI

Treatment for Panic Disorder



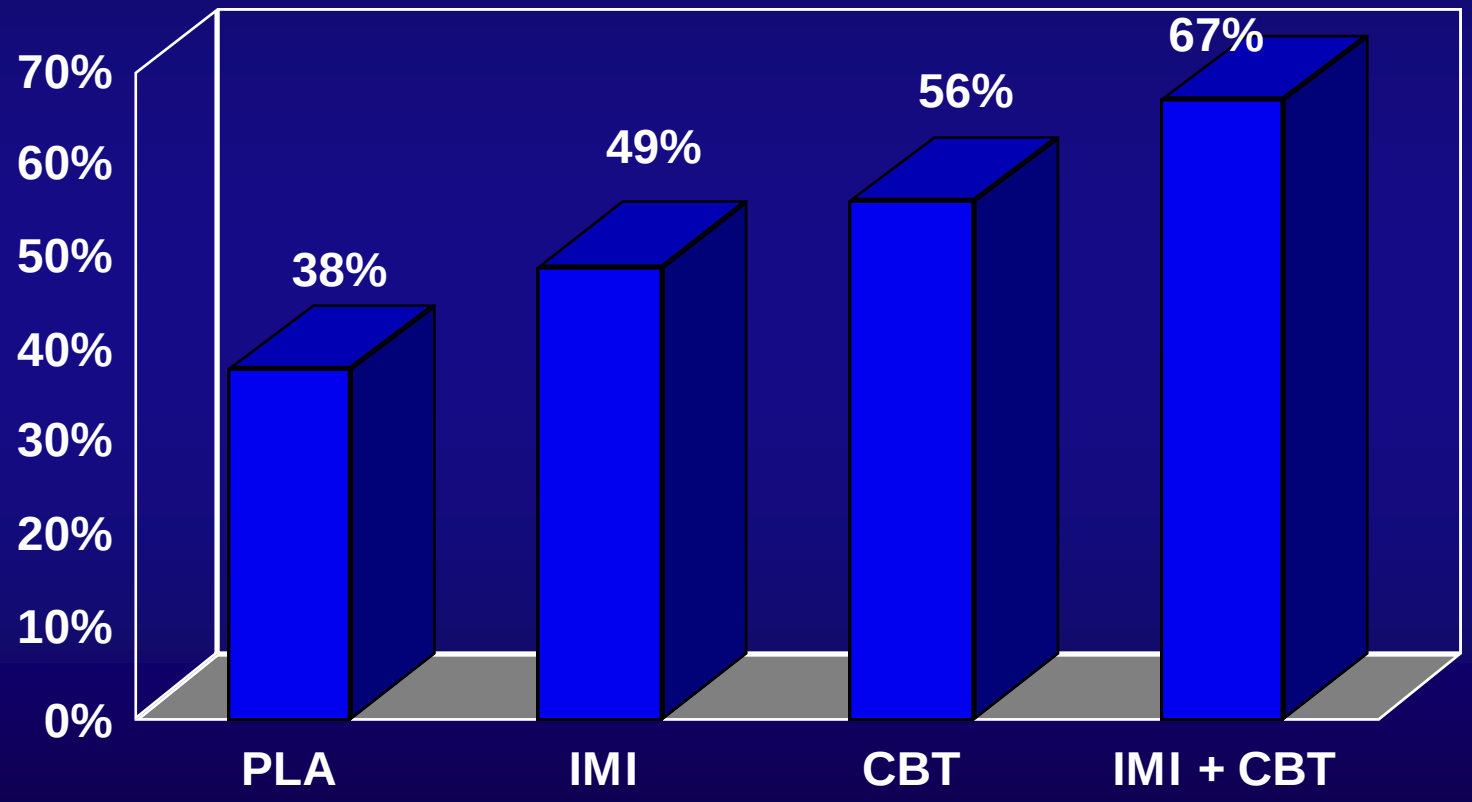
*

Barlow D. et al., *JAMA* 2000; 283: 2529-36.

3-Month Responders

Multicenter Comparative Treatment Study

(intent-to treat)



X^2 p =0.03; C+I vs I : p = 0.03; C+ I vs P p = 0.02;

*

Barlow D. et al., *JAMA* 2000; 283: 2529-36.

Meta-Analysis of Combined Treatments for PD

- 106 Studies, short-term treatments
- N= 5011 Pre-Rx, 4016 Post-Rx
- 222 Treatment conditions
- Variables were
  - med alone
  - med + exposure in vivo
  - placebo + exposure in vivo
  - exposure in vivo plus psych management

Van Balcom et al JNMD1997 185:510-16

*

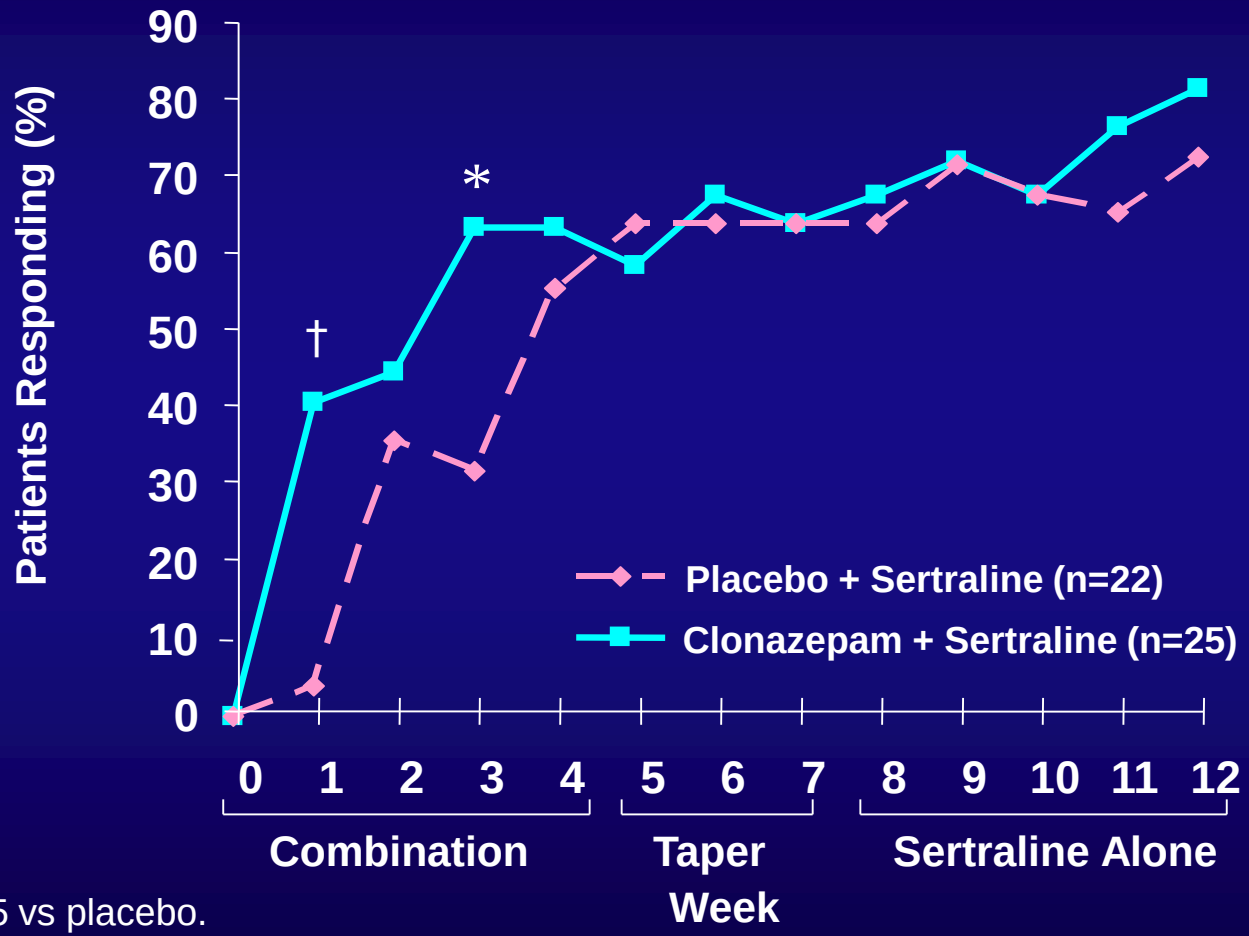
Meta-Analysis of Combined Treatments for PD

- All treatments superior to placebo conditions for agoraphobic avoidance; CBT = other treatments
- Antidepressant superior to PBO for panic attacks
- Exposure not effective against panic attacks but worked for agoraphobia

*

Combining Medications For Panic Disorder

Sertraline + Clonazepam or PbO



* *P*<0.05 vs placebo.
†*P*<0.003 vs placebo.
Goddard et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry.* 2001;58:681.

This section is optional
-prn use

Benzodiazepines-

Lots of heat, little light

Benzodiazepine Pearls

- **Benzodiazepines**
  - **Tolerance to anxiolytic effects very rare**
  - **Lower maintenance than acute doses often sufficient**
  - **Abuse in anxious patients *very rare***
  - **Clinician's confidence in his ability to help patient completely discontinue BZ is critical**

*

Patients Can Discontinue BZs if:

- Motivated and well-informed about taper plan
- Clinician concurs
- No stressful events expected
- Very gradual taper is used
- Patient understands that
  - Return of original Sx is **NOT FAILURE**
  - Continued Rx may indicated

*

Discussing Patient Concerns About Dependence

- Patients often express concerns about becoming dependent on medication
- Question: is it worth it to wear eyeglasses?
  - *Should you expect to continue to see properly after 6-12 months?*
  - *If you could not see as well, would you feel as if you were "dependent" on glasses?*
- Use other medical analogies, such as utilizing insulin for diabetes or inhalers for asthma

*

Withdrawal and Dependence

- ***Physiologic Dependence***
- **Physiologic adaptation produced by repeated administration of a drug, necessitating continued administration to prevent the appearance of *discontinuation* symptoms.**
- **Can occur with antidepressants, other agents**

*

Addiction and Abuse

Medical vs Nonmedical Psychoactive Substance Use

Medical vs Nonmedical Use

	Medical Use	Nonmedical Use
Intent	To treat diagnosed illness	To "party" or to "treat" distressing effects of alcohol or other drug abuse
Effect	Makes life of user better	Makes life of user worse
Pattern	Stable, medically sensible	Unstable, usually high dose
Control	Shared honestly with physician	Self-controlled
Legality	Legal	Illegal (except alcohol use by adults)

*

DuPont RL. *Bull Menninger Clin.* 1995;59(suppl A):A53-A72.

Key Features of Addiction

Use eyeglasses and heroin addiction as models to help illustrate to patient what is and is not addiction

*

DuPont RL. *Bull Menninger Clin.* 1998;62:231-242.

Time to Stop?
Using the BZD Checklist

- **Problem being treated**
  - **Does problem justify continued use of BZD?**
  - **Has patient significantly benefited from BZD treatment?**
- **BZD use**
  - **Does patient's use of BZD remain within prescribed limits and duration of treatment?**
  - **Has the patient avoided the use of other prescribed or nonprescribed agents?**

DuPont RL. *Benzodiazepines: The Social Issues – A Guide for the Physician.* Rockville, Md: The Institute for Behavior and Health, Inc.; 1986. (cont)

*

Using the BZD Checklist

- **Toxic behavior**
  - **Has the patient been free of any signs of intoxication or impairment from the use of the BZD medication, either alone or in combination with other agents?**
- **Family monitor**
  - **Does the patient's family monitor confirm that there have been no problems with BZD use and that the patient has benefited from the use of the medication?**

*

DuPont RL. *Benzodiazepines: The Social Issues – A Guide for the Physician.* Rockville, Md: The Institute for Behavior and Health, Inc.; 1986.

How to Discontinue Medication for Panic Disorder

Step 1: Patient and physician alliance

Step 2: Taper → Symptoms appear → Wait 2-3 weeks*

Taper → Symptoms persist → May need to continue treatment*

Taper → Symptoms disappear → Continue taper

- **Symptoms may be withdrawal or reemergence of panic**

*

BZ Taper Outcome

- **Panic-related symptoms which stably persist reappear during taper**
  - **Clinically informative outcome of taper attempt**
  - **Indicate that continued Rx necessary**
- **Options**
  - **Continue pharmacotherapy**
  - **Add CBT, attempt taper again later**
  - **Combined**

*

BZ Taper Strategy

- ~10% reduction in dose / 2-3 wks
  - No more than 25% per week
- At 50% of initial dose, slow taper
- Short-acting BZ: Maintain multiple daily doses to minimize plasma level fluctuations
- Switch to long-acting agent may be useful but probably not necessary
- CBT may enhance taper success

*

Recurrence of Sx during Taper Suggested Strategy

- Stop taper
  - May increase dose to tolerable discomfort level
- Hold at same dose 2-4 weeks
  - If Sx Persistent =Probably Panic-related
  - If Sx gone= Probably BZ taper -related
- New Sx more likely withdrawal
  - Sensitivity to noise and light
  - Dysesthesia, others

*

Is Long Term BZ for Panic Disorder Acceptable?

- PDR: BZ are ok for 4 months--
  - Then what???
- American Psychiatric Association Formally Supports Use of Long-term BZ As Needed (Salzman)
  - For Panic Disorder, GAD
  - Intolerance to other meds
  - Incomplete response

*

Long Term BZ May Be Justified

- Document rationale for long-term requirement in record
- Significant other(s) can corroborate if:
  - Continued benefit
  - No non-medical BZ use (abuse)
  - No BZ-related toxicity
- Consultation from colleague to document medico-legal and clinical clarity

*

Pearl: If it's Anxiety ,
there is risk for Depression

Pearl: When in Doubt, Treat as if Depression was Imminent

Summary
Treatment Decisions

- Initial pharmacotherapy: SSRIs
- Start with low dose
- Use ≥ 2 different SSRIs before changing classes
- Utilize CBT to reduce attrition, reduce fear of bodily sensations, eliminate phobic avoidance, and facilitate discontinuation of medication

Summary

- "If it quacks like a duck and waddles, it is likely a duck."
- Panic disorder is common and disabling, and is treatable
- Under-recognized and under-treated
- Functional status -NOT panic attacks for outcome

Acknowledgements

M. Katherine Shear, MD

Columbia University, NY

James Ellison, MD

Harvard Medical School

Emily Goddard, MD

Medical University of SC

Nicholas Ward, MD

University of Washington, Seattle

Question #1

True or False

Males Have a Higher Lifetime Frequency of Panic Disorder in the U.S. as Compared to Females.

Answer #1

False!

Female – 5% Lifetime Frequency

Male – 2% Lifetime Frequency

Question #2

True or False

When Panic Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder are Comorbid, the # of Suicide Attempts Increases.

Answer #2

True, True, and True!

Question #3

Panic Disorder increases the risk for other psychiatric disorders : GAD, OCD, social anxiety disorder, major depression

Which usually precedes panic disorder?

Answer #3

Social Anxiety often precedes panic disorder

Question #4

What is First Line Pharmacotherapy for Panic Disorder?

Answer #4

SSRIs

Question #5

Which Subcortical Structure is Thought to be Important in Fear Processing?

Answer #5

The Amygdala