Bipolar Disorders: Therapeutic Options

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Part 4: Specific Medications for Bipolar Disorder (Lithium and Antiepileptic Drugs)

Teaching Points

1. Lithium requires blood level monitoring, has a wide range of side effects and drug interactions.
2. Divalproex requires blood level monitoring, has three black box warnings, but only a few drug interactions of concern.
3. Carbamazepine and lamotrigine have established roles for treating bipolar disorders. The other antiepileptic drugs do not.

Outline

I. Lithium
   - A. Pharmacology
   - B. Side Effects
   - C. Interactions

II. Divalproex
   - A. Mechanism of Action
   - B. Pharmacology
   - C. Side Effects
   - D. Interactions

III. Carbamazepine
   - A. Mechanism of Action
   - B. Pharmacology
   - C. Side Effects
   - D. Interactions

IV. Lamotrigine
   - A. Mechanism of Action
   - B. Pharmacology
   - C. Side Effects
   - D. Interactions

V. Gabapentin

VI. Oxcarbasepine

VII. Topiramate

VIII. Tiagabine

IX. Other
   - A. Zonisamide
   - B. Levetiracetam
   - C. Omega-3 Fatty Acids

X. Pregnancy and Breastfeeing

XI. Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

Pre-Lecture Exam Question 1

1. Which of the following is not a well-established side effect of lithium?
   a. Nephrotoxicity
   b. Tremor
   c. Hepatotoxicity
   d. Weight Gain
   e. Hypothyroidism

Question 2

2. **Which of the following medications has been most closely associated with polycystic ovarian syndrome?**
   a. **Oxcarbazepine**
   b. **Divalproex**
   c. **Lithium**
   d. **Lamotrigine**
   e. **Gabapentin**

Question 3

3. Which of the following medications is mostly likely to cause hyponatremia?
   a. Lithium
   b. Carbamazepine
   c. Topiramate
   d. Oxcarbazepine
   e. Zonisamide

Question 4

4. Oral contraceptives cause substantial reductions in blood levels of which of the following medications?
   a. Lamotrigine
   b. Divalproex
   c. Carbamazepine
   d. Gabapentine
   e. Lithium

Question 5

5. Which of the following medications can double the blood level of lamotrigine?
   a. Carbamazepine
   b. Divalproex
   c. Oxcarbazepine
   d. Lithium
   e. Topiramate

Lithium

- **Half-life: 24 hours**
- **Not metabolized**
  - **Renal excretion**
- **Not protein bound**
- **Dosing**
  - **Initial**
    - 600-900 mg/day (divided or single dose)
  - **Maintenance**
    - Serum levels: 0.6-1.2 mmol/l

Lithium

- **Black box warning**
  - **Toxicity**
- **Monitoring**
  - **Serum levels**
  - **Kidney and thyroid function**
  - **Serum calcium (?)**

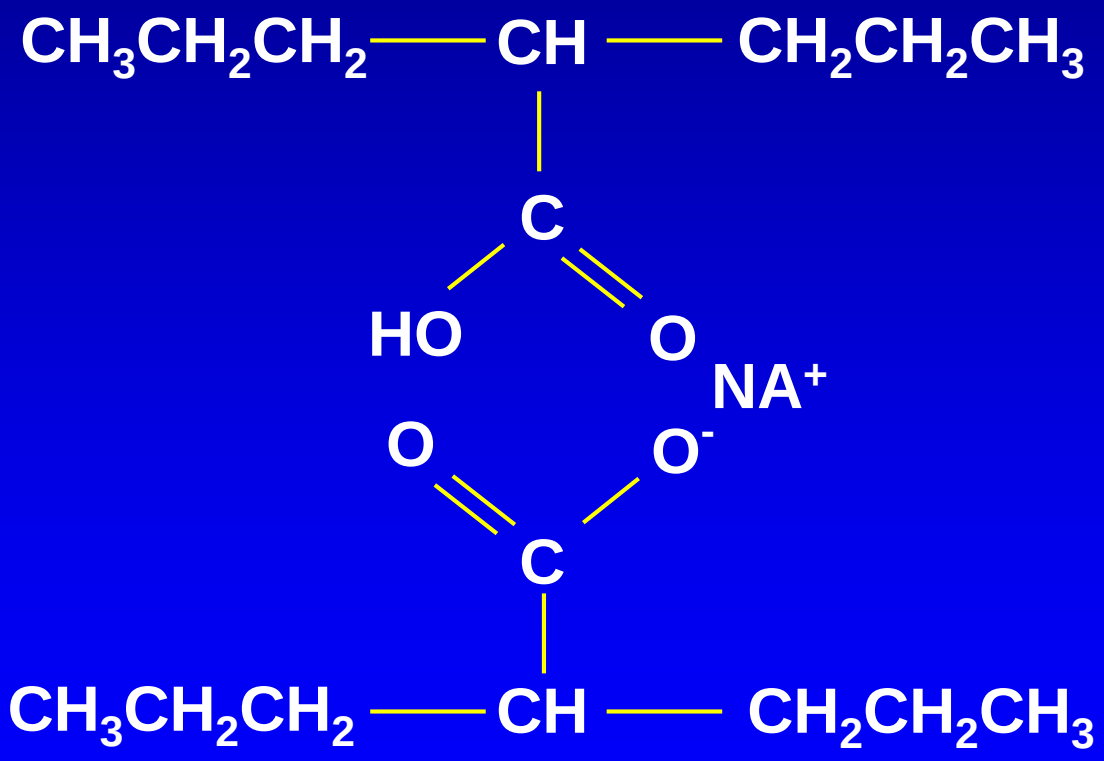
Lithium Side Effects

- Cognitive
- Tremor
- Gastrointestinal
- Endocrine
  - Thyroid
  - Parathyroid
- Weight gain
- Skin
- Renal
- Teratogenicity
- Toxicity

Serum Lithium Levels (incomplete list)

Increased	Not Changed	Decreased
Thiazides	Amiloride (?)	Acetazolamide
NSAIDs	Furosemide	Mannitol
ACE inhibitors	Aspirin	Aminophylline
Angiotensin II receptor (type AT_1) antagonists	Sulindac	
Low sodium diet		Theophylline
Dehydration		Caffeine
Elderly		Mania
Renal disease		Pregnancy

Divalproex Sodium



Valproate: Mechanism of Action

- Increases brain GABA levels
- Inhibits GABA catabolism
- Potentiates postsynaptic GABA responses
- Blocks voltage-dependent sodium channels
- Modulates glutamatergic neurotransmission

Valproate

- **Indications**
  - **Epilepsy**
  - **Acute mania**
  - **Migraine prophylaxis**
- **Role**
  - **Acute and prophylactic treatment of bipolar disorder**

Valproate

- **Half-life: 6-16 hours**
- **Protein binding: >90%**
- **Dosing in mania (divalproex)**
  - **Initial: 250 mg tid or oral loading (20-30 mg/kg)**
  - **Maintenance: serum conc = 50-125 μg/ml**
- **Dosing in mania (divalproes ER)**

  Initial: 25mg/kg/day (single daily dose)

  Maintenance: serum conc=85-125 μg/ml

Valproate

- **Black box warnings**
  - **Hepatotoxicity**
  - **Teratogenicity**
  - **Pancreatitis**
- **Monitoring**
  - **Blood levels**
  - **CBC, platelets, LFTs**

Valproate Side Effects

- Cognitive (uncommon)
- Tremor
- Gastrointestinal
- Weight gain
- Hair loss
- Hepatotoxicity
- Pancreatitis
- Teratogenicity
- Polycystic ovarian syndrome (?)

Valproate and Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome

- 230 women, ages 18-45, in STEP-BD study
- Oligomenorrhea and hyperandosteronism

  Valproate: **10.5%** (9/86)

  non-Valproate: **1.4%** (2/144) (P=.002)
- All oligomenorrhea in first 12 months
- PCOs: no significant difference

Joffe et al. Biol Psychiatry 2006

Valproate Interactions
(An Incomplete Listing)

- **Aspirin (avoid)**

  free VPA, ↓ platelet function

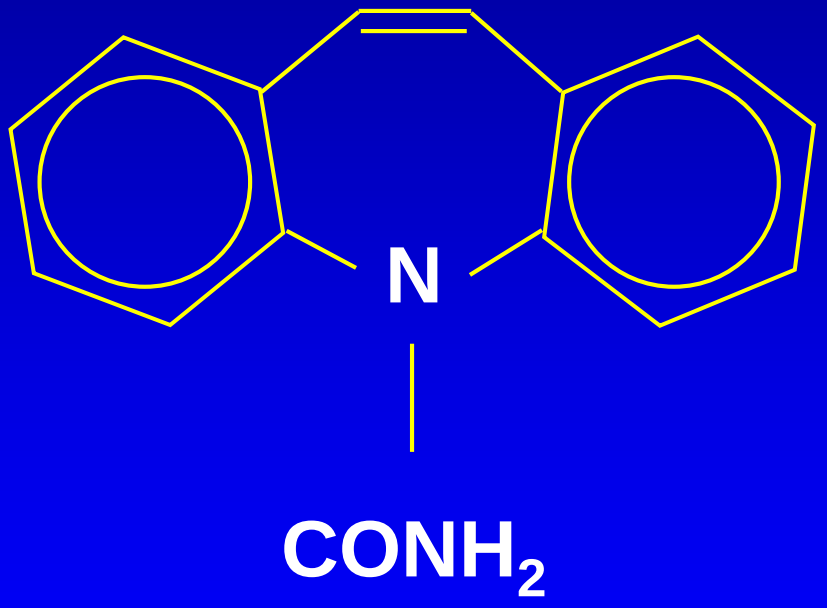
- **Carbamazepine**

  ↓ VPA, CBZ-epoxide

- **Lamotrigine**

  lamotrigine

Carbamazepine



Carbamazepine: Mechanism of Action

- Blocks voltage-dependent sodium channels
- Inhibits glutamatergic neurotransmission
- Modifies adenosine receptors
- Increases extracellular serotonin

Carbamazepine

- **Indications**
  - **Trigeminal neuralgia**
  - **Epilepsy**
- **Role**
  - **Acute and prophylactic treatment of bipolar disorder**
  - **Adjunctive treatment with other mood stabilizers**

Carbamazepine

- **Half-life**
  - **Initial: 25-65 hours**
  - **Induced: 12-17 hours**
- **Protein binding: 76%**
- **Metabolism**
  - **CYP3A4**
  - **Hepatic autoinduction**
  - **10, 11-epoxide**

Carbamazepine

- **Immediate and extended release**
- **Dosing**
  - **Initial: 200-400 mg/day (divided)**
  - **Maintenance: serum conc = 4-12 μg/ml**

Carbamazepine

- **Black box warnings**
  - **Aplastic anemia (1/100,000)**
  - **Agranulocytosis (1/100,000)**
- **Monitoring**
  - **Blood levels**
  - **CBC, platelets, LFTs**

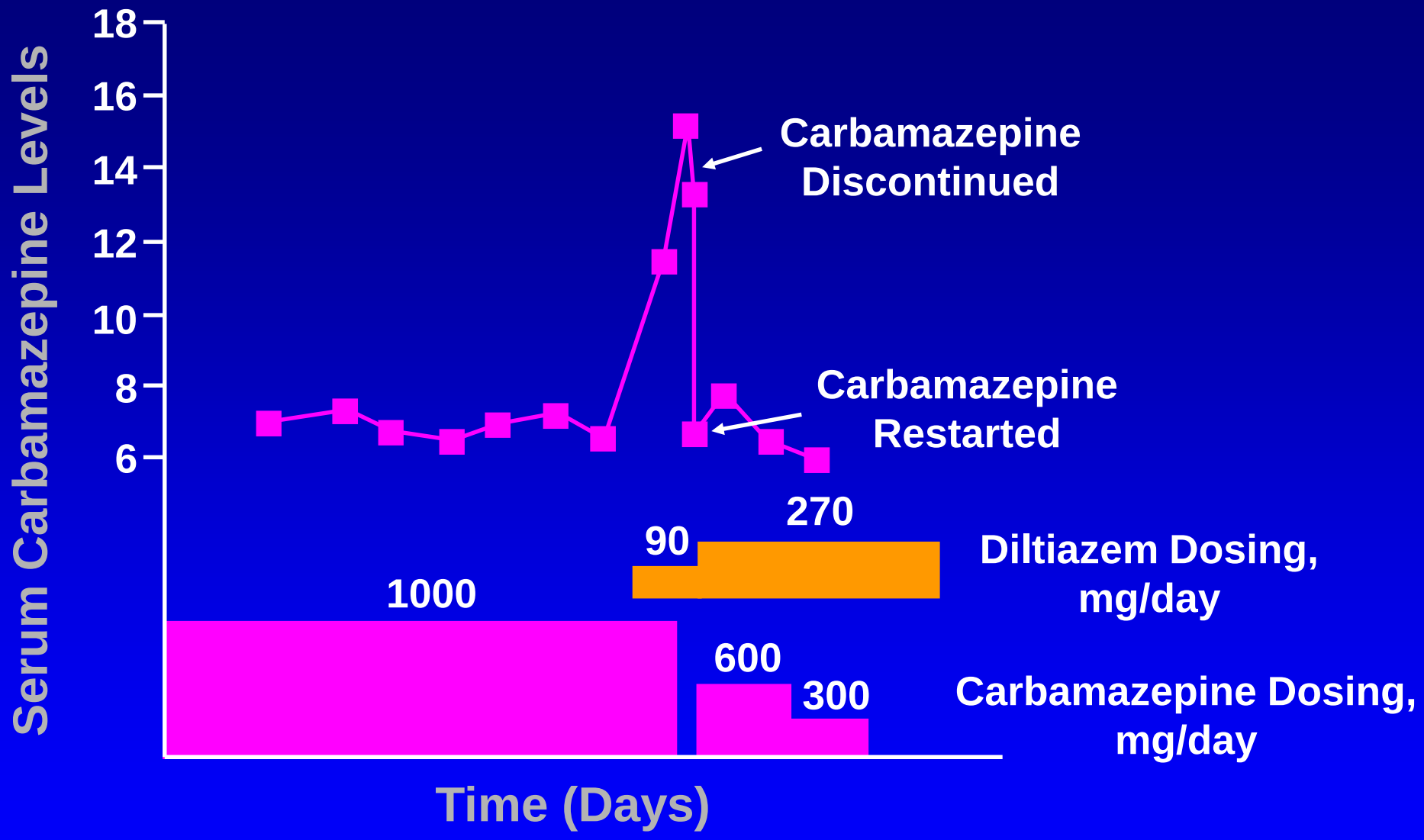
Carbamazepine Side Effects

- Sedation
- Dizziness
- Ataxia
- Double/blurred vision
- GI distress
- Hematopoietic suppression
- Hepatotoxicity (rare)
- Dermatologic
- Teratogenicity
- Hyponatremia

Carbamazepine Interactions

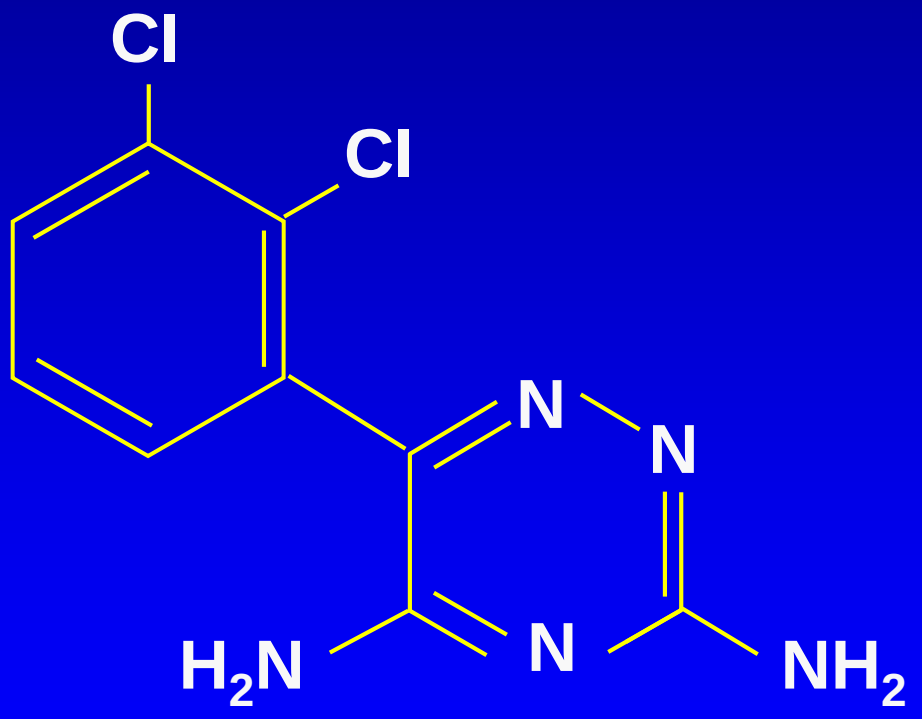
An Incomplete Listing

- **CBZ decreases levels of:**
  - **Clonazepam, clozapine, olanzapine, haloperidol, alprazolam, bupropion, oral contraceptives**
- **CBZ levels increased by:**
  - **Cimetidine, macrolides, fluoxetine, valproate, isoniazid, verapamil, ketoconazole**



Shaughnessy AF, Mosley MR. Neurology. 1992(Apr);42(4):937-938

Lamotrigine



Lamotrigine
Mechanism of Action

- Inhibits use-dependent voltage-sensitive sodium channels
- Stabilizes neuronal membranes
- Modulates presynaptic release of excitatory amino acid neurotransmitters such as glutamate
- Reduces repetitive neuronal after-discharge

Xie et al., 1998

Lamotrigine

- Metabolized by conjugation
- Autoinduction
  - Half-life: 25% ↓
  - Clearance: 37% ↑
- Inhibits dihydrofolate reductase
- Melanin binding
  (52 weeks after single dose)

Lamotrigine and Pregnancy

- Clearance increased > 50% early in pregnancy
- Clearance normalized rapidly postpartum
- Be alert for ↓ efficacy during and ↑ side effects after

Tran et. al. Neurology 59:251-255, 2002

Side Effects of Lamotrigine

Dose Related	Not Dose Related
Dizziness	Headache
Diplopia	Dermatologic
Ataxia	10% benign rash
Blurred vision	3/1,000 adults—severe rash
Nausea and vomiting	Do not rapidly escalate dose
Insomnia	Warn patients about rash

Lamotrigine and Serious Rash in Mood Disorders Trials

- **Monotherapy (1/1233) 0.08%**
- **Adjunctive (2/1538) 0.13%**

Package Insert, June 2003

Lamotrigine Dosing

- **Monotherapy**
  - **Weeks 1 and 2: 12.5-25 mg/day**
  - **Weeks 3 and 4: 25-50 mg/day**
- **With valproate: ↓ dose by 50%**
- **Maintenance: 50-400 mg/day**

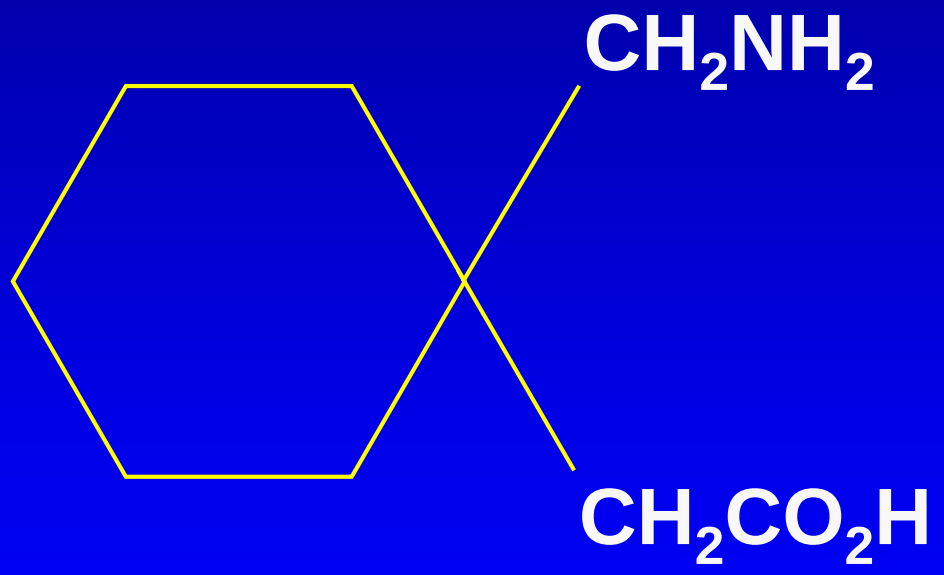
Lamotrigine (LTG) Interactions

- Valproate **doubles** LTG levels
- LTG ↓ vaproate levels 25%
- CBZ ↓ LTG levels 40% (OXC-ok)
- Oral contraceptives ↓ LTG levels 50%
- Pregnancy ↑ LTG clearance >50%
- Sertraline ↑ LTG levels 2-fold (n=2)
- LTG ↑ clozapine levels 3-fold (n=1)
- LTG ↑ risperidone levels 6-fold (n=1)

Not all Anticonvulsants Are Antimanic

- **For example –**
  - **Gabapentin**
  - **Lamotrigine**
  - **Tiagabine**
  - **Topiramate**
  - **etc.**

Gabapentin



Limitations of Gabapentin In Bipolar Disorders

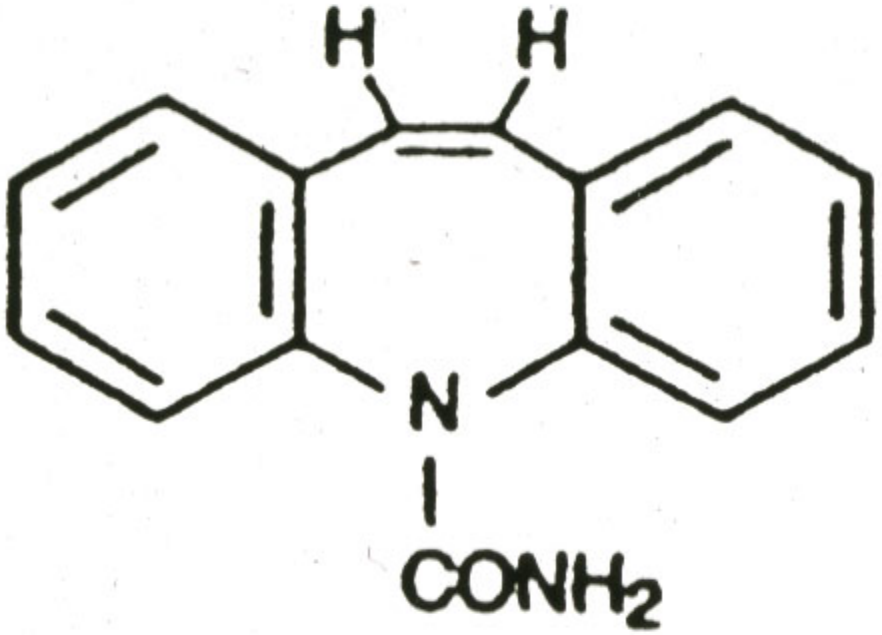
- Not effective as monotherapy in treatment-resistant rapid cycling
- Not effective as primary add-on antimanic agent
- Possible use for associated anxiety/insomnia

Gabapentin

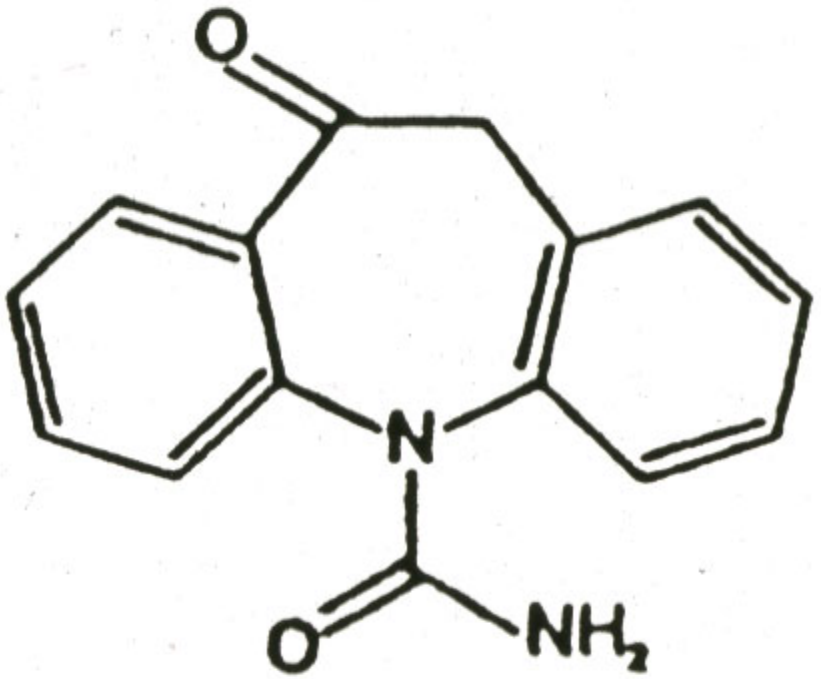
- **Half-life: 5-7 hours**
- **Bioavailability decreases with dose**
- **Not protein bound**
- **Not metabolized**
- **No important drug interactions (except ↑ felbamate)**

Gabapentin Side Effects

- AE dropouts (epilepsy trials): 7%
- Most common—somnolence, fatigue, ataxia, dizziness
- Uncommon—weight gain, edema, incontinence, hypomania



Carbamazepine



Oxcarbazepine

Oxcarbazepine

- 10-keto analogue of CBZ
- Prodrug ⟶ MHD
  (10-hydroxycarbazepine)
- Half-life OXC 2 hours
  MHD 9 hours
- Protein binding 40%

Oxcarbazepine for Acute Mania (Double-Blind Studies)

- Better than placebo (N=6)
  - Emrich et al, 1983
- Equal to haloperidol (N=20)
  - Muller and Stoll, 1984
- Equal to haloperidol (N=38)
  - Emrich, 1990
- Equal to lithium (N=52)
  - Emrich, 1990

Emrich HM, et al. Pharmacol Biochem Behav.1983;19:369-372
Emrich HT. Int Clin Psychopharmacol.1990;5(suppl 1):83-89

Oxcarbazepine Side Effects

- AE dropouts 23%
  - monotherapy 9%
  - pediatrics 11%
- Common – nausea, vomiting, dizziness, somnolence, ataxia
- Uncommon – hyponatremia (< 125 mEq/L 2.5%)

Oxcarbazepine and Hyponatremia

- Sodium < 125 mmol/l in 2.5%
- Symptomatic hyponatremia – uncommon
- CBZ → OXC: Sodium levels may ↓
- Monitor at risk patients
- Treat - ↓ or stop drug, restrict fluids

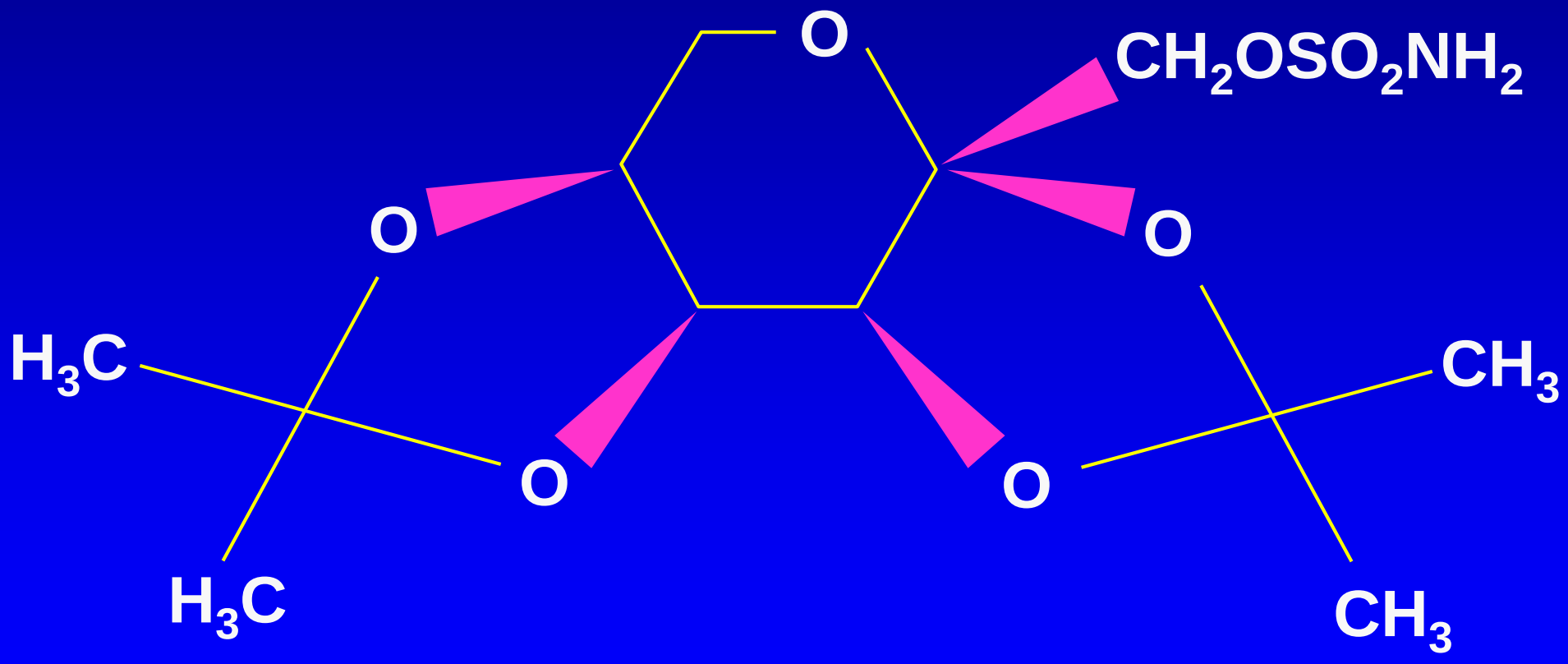
CBZ and OXC Hyponatremia

- ↑ renal sensitivity to ADH
- Direct ADH-like activity
- ↑ central release of ADH
- ↓ vasopressinase activity

Oxcarbazepine Interactions

- No autoinduction
- Inhibits 2C19
  (e.g., ↑ phenytoin)
- Induces 3A4
  (e.g., ↓ ethinylestradiol)
- Fewer interactions than CBZ

Topiramate



Topiramate (Topamax)

- **Half life 21 hours**
- **Minimal metabolism (< 30%)**
- **Inhibits CYP2C19**
- **↓ estrogen in oral contraceptives**

Topiramate

- **AE dropouts (epilepsy trials): 28%**
- **More common: somnolence, cognitive impairment, dizziness, ataxia, psychomotor slowing, paresthesias, weight loss**
- **Kidney stones: 1.5%**

Topiramate and Kidney Stones

- Occurred in 1.5% (32/2086)
- 2 to 4 times ↑ risk
- Men > women
- Reported in kids
- One bipolar II woman
- Carbonic anhydrase inhibition

Topiramate Adverse Events
(drug minus placebo, epilepsy trials)

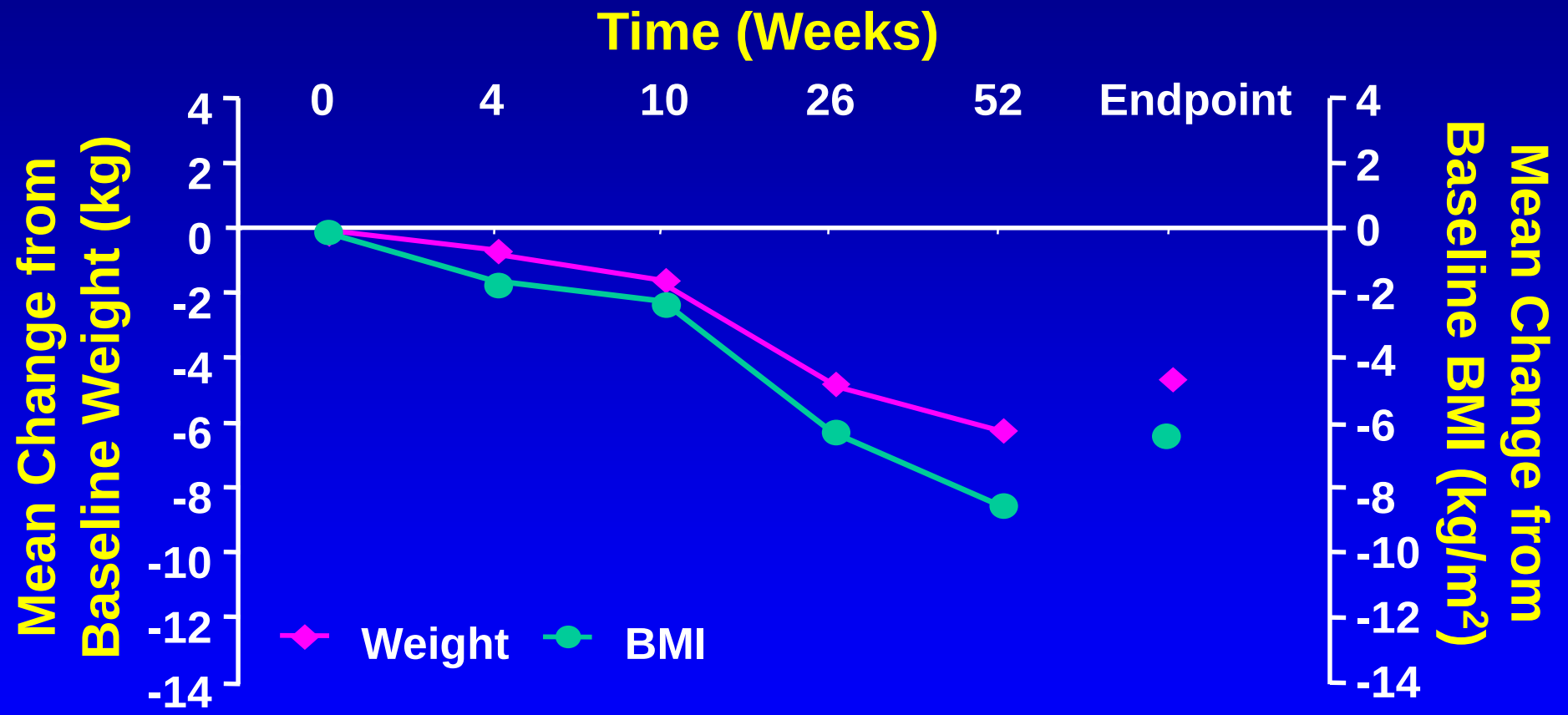
	200 mg	400 mg	600-1000 mg
• Nervousness	5.8%	10.1%	13.1%
• Depression	2.6%	1.1%	7.1%
• Mood problems	0	4.2%	8.4%

Package insert

Topiramate Warnings

- Metabolic acidosis
  - Hyperchloremic, non-anion gap acidosis
  - Low serum bicarbonate
  - Baseline and periodic bicarbonate levels
- Acute myopia and secondary angle closure glaucoma
- Oligohidrosis and hyperthermia

Topiramate as Adjunct Therapy in Bipolar Disorder: Change in Weight and BMI*



*Last observation carried forward; p<0.05; compared with baseline; McElroy SL et al. Biol Psychiatry. 2000;47:1025-1033

Tiagabine

- GABA uptake inhibitor
- Metabolized by CYP3A
- Half-life: 7 to 9 hours
- Protein binding: 96%

Tiagabine

- Side effect dropout: 21%
- More common side effects
  - Dizziness, nervousness
  - Somnolence, fatigue
  - Difficulty concentrating
  - Tremor
  - Abdominal pain

Zonisamide

- Sulfonamide AED
- Half-life 63 hours
  (105 hours in RBCs)
- Carbonic anhydrase inhibitor (weak)
- Metabolized by CYP3A4 and acetylation
- Does not inhibit P450 enzymes

Zonisamide

- **Kidney stones – 4% (40/991)**
- **Serum creatinine – 8% mean increase**
  - **Clinical significance?**
  - **Consider periodic monitoring**
- **Oligohidrosis and hyperthermia (especially in kids)**

Levetiracetam

- **Add-on for partial onset seizures in adults (FDA Nov. 99)**
- **Structural analog of piracetam**
- **Unique mechanism of action**
- **Role in bipolar disorder?**

Levetiracetam: A Synaptic Vesicle Protein Modulator

- High affinity binding to SV2A (synaptic vesicle protein 2A)
- SV2A knockout mice – seizures and death within 3 weeks
- But does this explain mechanism of action?

Stahl SM, J Clin Psychiatry 65:1162-63, Sep 2004

Omega-3 Fatty Acids for Unstable Bipolar Disorder (n=30)

- 4 months, db, placebo-controlled
- Recurrence: Omega-3 7%
  Placebo 47%
- Mechanism: altered post-synaptic transduction?

Stoll et al. ACNP Poster 12/97

Eicosapentanoic Acid (EPA) for Bipolar Depression

- Two 4-month, placebo-controlled studies (6 gms/day)
- Study 1. – Acute BP I, II, NOS depression (n=59)
- Study 2. – Rapid cycling BP I, II, NOS depression (n=62)
- EPA = placebo in both

Keck et al. Bipolar Disord 5(suppl 1): 58, 2003

Eicosapentanoic Acid (EPA) for Bipolar Depression (12 week, double-blind)

- Ethyl-EPA 1 gm (n=24) or 2 gm (n=25)/day, placebo (n=26)
- 87% bipolar I, 85% adjunctive
- Entry HAM-D >9, baseline 15
- 1 gm=2gm=placebo
- 1gm+2gm >placebo

Frangou et al. Br J Psychiatry 2006;188:46-50

FDA Pregnancy Categories

A: Controlled Studies – No Risk

B: No Evidence of Risk in Women

C: Risk Cannot be Ruled Out

D: Positive Evidence of Risk

X: Contraindicated in Pregnancy

Mood Stabilizers and Pregnancy

FDA Risk Category

- **Lithium** **D**
- **Valproate** **D**
- **Carbamazepine** **D**

Fetal Valproate Syndrome

- Distinctive facial phenotype
- Nueral tube defects 10x
- Congenital heart defects 4x
- Oral clefts 5x

Clayton-Smith and Donnal, J Med Genet 32:727-727, 1995

New Anticonvulsants and Pregnancy FDA Risk Categories

- Gabapentin C
- Lamotrigine C
- Tiagabine C
- Topiramate C

Limited data in women for all

Breast-feeding during maternal pharmacotherapy is acceptable if the risk-benefit analysis is carefully considered and the mother-baby pair is monitored

Wisner, et al. AJP 153:1132-1137, 1996 (Sept)

Atypical Antipsychotics

Please see elsewhere in the Model Psychopharmacology Curriculum for pharmacology, side effeccts, drug interactions

Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance (DBSA)

730 N. Franklin Street, Suite 501

Chicago, IL 60610

(800) 826-3632

www.dbsalliance.org

Formerly: National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association (NMDA)

New Options for Bipolar Disorders

- The future looks bright
- Data-based treatment when possible
- Treatment need often exceeds data availability
- The skillful combination of art and science will prevail

Post-Lecture Exam Question 1

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   c. Hepatotoxicity
   d. Weight Gain
   e. Hypothyroidism

Question 2

2. Which of the following medications has been most closely associated with polycystic ovarian syndrome?
   a. Oxcarbazepine
   b. Divalproex
   c. Lithium
   d. Lamotrigine
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   d. Oxcarbazepine
   e. Zonisamide

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   c. Carbamazepine
   d. Gabapentine
   e. Lithium

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   b. Divalproex
   c. Oxcarbazepine
   d. Lithium
   e. Topiramate

The end