

The Clinician's Guide to Bipolar Disorder: Integrating Pharmacology and Psychotherapy

David J Miklowitz and Michael J Gitlin
 Guilford 2014
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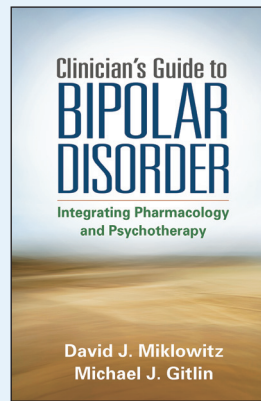
This book is readable, interesting and structured in a straightforward way. The authors are acknowledged experts who have combined their knowledge and clinical experience to provide a practical guide for the management of patients with bipolar disorder, from the diagnosis to the treatment of the different phases of the condition.

The book highlights the following topics: the importance of an individualized treatment to be realized in collaboration with each patient; the key role of the family, friends and psychosocial context in the treatment of the disorder and in prevent-

ing the recurrences; and the imperative need for integration between the pharmacotherapy and psychotherapy in the management of these patients.

The authors pragmatically discuss the management of bipolar disorder. They analyse the complexity of this condition, its many different facets, each patient's uniqueness and the multiple challenges which clinicians may face in the 'real world'. In addition, the authors offer practical clinical tips through reporting clinical cases, simulated clinical interviews, questionnaires and explanatory tables. Efficacy and side effects of the commonly used drugs as well as some psychotherapeutic approaches are also discussed, although not always deeply.

The chapter on medical non-adherence, in which the authors report helpful



instruments to assess and manage non-compliance of patients, is an essential topic.

The book is aimed at an audience of clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, counsellors and psychiatric nurses, as well as graduate students and residents. However, I have a feeling that the authors' attempt to increase the accessibility and readability, in order to

cover a so wide an audience, may have limited the utility of the book for some of the above.

Overall, the book is a very useful guide to the treatment of bipolar disorder which is likely to be useful to all interested in this important condition.

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The ECG Made Easy (8th edn)

John Hampton
 Churchill Livingstone Elsevier 2013
 Price £19.99. Pp 208
 ISBN 9780702046414

Already a well-known classic, *The ECG Made Easy* by John R Hampton is a steadfast feature on every medical student's bookshelf, and for good reason. Starting from the very basics, this book teaches the reader how to fully understand the theory behind interpretation of electrocardiograms (ECGs) rather than simply pattern recognition.

The book is split into two parts. Part one guides the reader through the first principles of ECG interpretation using a simple systematic approach (rate, rhythm, axis, etc), tackling common ECG changes and also approaches more complex topics to satisfy the most conscientious of readers. From the outset, the writer makes use of every single word which, although occasionally heavy going, is to the book's credit. For this reason, the first part is probably better tackled in small chunks rather than attempting to digest it in one go.

Part two is where the book really comes into its own. It approaches ECG interpretation based upon the presenting complaint which helps contextualize the theory from part one and includes an interesting segment on normal variants. It also discusses

what to look for to guide diagnosis, providing simple, easy to remember hints and tips while cross-referencing part one to provide background theory. This is useful as an initial learning mechanism and also as a handy reference material for the junior doctor.

All in all, *The ECG Made Easy* is still an essential tool for medical students.

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Neuropsychology of Cardiovascular Disease (2nd edn)

Edited by Shari R Waldstein,
 Merrill F Elias
 Psychology Press 2015
 Price £39.99. Pp 588
 ISBN 978 1 84872 656 7

Neurons need a continuous and sufficient supply of oxygen and glucose, via the cardiovascular system, to maintain their health. Without this, neurons are damaged or die, and cognitive deterioration follows. But the devil is in the detail. This volume of review articles descends step by step into the details. Taking each individual factor, the contributors methodically and thoroughly review the evidence that confirms or fails to support the effect of various risk factors on vascular health. Beginning with smoking and alcohol, and then followed by exercise, hypertension,

diabetes and obesity, each is discussed in detail. Less attended factors such as inflammatory processes, cholesterol and fatty acids, homocysteine and the B vitamins, and stress are then reviewed, as are cardiac factors. Final chapters review data related to the vascular contribution to dementia, both vascular dementias and Alzheimer's.

A number of themes are interwoven through the book. Perhaps most important is the multiplicity of interacting factors affecting vascular efficiency and thus cognition. It is difficult to get clear and unambiguous results from research with so many contributing variables. Both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies are fraught with confounding factors affecting their results. Choice of cognitive measures is also problematic, brief and global measures *vs* more specific and detailed measurements.

A second theme is the progression from pre-clinical damage to the brain and subsequent development of more severe cognitive impairment. This progressive development means that causative factors should be addressed long before the clinical appearance of the decline is apparent. A hopeful theme is that lifestyle choices or relatively simple medical interventions are available that could protect against some of the inevitable processes of cognitive deterioration.

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