

# Medications

Anyone can develop a mental illness - you, a family member, a friend, or a neighbor. Some disorders are mild; other are serious and long-lasting. These conditions can be diagnosed and treated. Most people can live better lives after treatment. And psychotherapeutic medications are an increasingly important element in the successful treatment of mental illness.

Medications for mental illnesses were first introduced in the early 1950s when the antipsychotic chlorpromazine. Other medications have followed. These medications have changed the lives of people with disorders for the better.

Psychotherapeutic medications also may make other kinds of treatment more effective. Someone who is too depressed to talk, for instance, may have the difficulty communication during psychotherapy or counseling, but the right medication may improve symptoms so the person can respond. For many patients, a combination of psychotherapy and medication can be an effective method of treatment.

Another benefit of these medications is an increased understanding of the causes of mental illness. Scientists have learned much more about the workings of the brain as a result of their investigations into how psychotherapeutic medications relieve the symptoms of disorders such as psychosis, depression, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and panic disorder.