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Acute management of the psychiatric patient presenting to the emergency department

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Abstract

Psychiatric problems account for at least 5.4% of all emergency department (ED) visits, and the rate of psychiatric-related visits has increased 15% since 1992. The World Health Organization ranks major depression as one of the most prevalent and disabling diseases in the world, and the lifetime prevalence of major depressive disorders in the United States is 16.2%. Depressed patients also have associated anxiety disorders (almost 60%), substance use disorders (24%), and impulse control disorder (30%). There are over 33,000 suicides in the US yearly and the number is climbing with war veterans. These patients present to ED's with a myriad of complaints and it is up to the clinician to identify the risk. The specific diagnosis for patients presenting to the ED with psychiatric complaints and the common clinical presentations are a mandatory knowledgebase for emergency care providers and nurses. The safety of providers when encountering these often volatile patients is pertinent and how to maintain that safety will be discussed. And in context to management of the patient to offset their exacerbation medication regime will be determined. Most importantly the world wide epidemic of psychiatric illness and its ramifications if not managed will be elaborated upon with hope for a healthier future.

Biography

Elda G. Ramirez completed her Ph.D. in Nursing in 2006. Her dissertation work led to the development of nationally recognized competencies for nurse practitioners in emergency care. She has presented nationally on issues in emergency care and has consulted internationally in Brazil and Panama on issues related to nursing and emergency care. She has published over 20 manuscripts and is currently completing a research study on venous thromboembolism in the trauma patient. She is currently on the editorial board of the Advanced Emergency Nursing Journal. She maintains a clinical practice as a nurse practitioner in emergency care.

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