

Medication Therapy for Psychiatric Crisis Events *Information Paper*

There are numerous options for emergency department treatment for psychiatric crisis events. Below are a variety of (non-exhaustive) references to assist the emergency physician in medication choices, options, and considerations. While this subcommittee's objective is focused on resources for approaches to medications, it is important to mention that other non-pharmacologic interventions must be considered as first-line along with pharmacotherapy, such as environmental modifications, de-escalation techniques, and many other physician and nursing interventions to treat psychiatric crisis events. Pharmacologic decisions would be based on the patient characteristics and the details of the psychiatric crisis event itself.

General

- Wilson, M, Heller R. "Rapidly Acting Treatment in the ED for Psychiatric Patients" Behavioral Emergencies for Healthcare Providers. Springer 2021.

Clinical Scenario: Agitation

- Holloman GH, Zeller SL. Overview of project BETA: Best practices in evaluation and treatment of agitation. *West J Emerg Med*. 2021;13(1):1-2.
- Zeller SL, Citrome L. Managing agitation associated with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder in the emergency setting. *West J Emerg Med*. 2016;17(2):165-72.
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Clinical Scenario: Excited Delirium

- Gonin P, Beysard N, Yersin B, et al. Excited delirium: A systemic review. *Acad Emerg Med*. 2018;25P:552-65.

Clinical Scenario: Pediatrics

- Kendrick JG, Goldman RD, Carr RR. Pharmacologic management of agitation and aggression in a

pediatric emergency department - A retrospective cohort study. *J Pediatr Pharmacol Ther.* 2018 Nov-Dec;23(6):455-59.

- Gerson R, Malas N, Mroczkowski MM. Crisis in the emergency department: The evaluation and management of acute agitation in children and adolescents. *Child Adolesc Psychiatr Clin N Am.* 2018 Jul;27(3):367-86.
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- Bregstein JS, Wagh AM, Tsze DS. Intranasal lorazepam for treatment of severe agitation in a pediatric behavioral health patient in the emergency department. *Ann Emerg Med.* 2020 Jan;75(1):86-9. doi: 10.1016/j.annemergmed.2019.05.020. Epub 2019 Jul 4.
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- Sorrentino A. Chemical restraints for the agitated, violent, or psychotic pediatric patient in the emergency department: controversies and recommendations. *Curr Opin Pediatr.* 2004 Apr;16(2):201-5.
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Medication: Benzodiazepines

Benzodiazepines have long been used for their sedative and anxiolytic properties, both in monotherapy and in combination with other agents. Many articles referenced in other sections also include benzodiazepine discussion, but, but additional references below.

- Zaman H, Sampson SJ, Beck ALS, et al. Benzodiazepines for psychosis-induced aggression or agitation. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2017. Issue 12.
- Korczak V, Kirby A, Gunja N. Chemical agents for the sedation of agitated patients in the ED: A systematic review. *Am J Emerg Med.* 2016;34(12):2426-31.
- Deal N, Hong M, Matorin A, et al. Stabilization and management of the acutely agitated or psychotic patient. *Emerg Med Clinics of N Am.* 2015;33(4):739-52.

Medication: Haloperidol and Droperidol

- Adams CE, Bergman H, Irving CB, et al. Haloperidol versus placebo for schizophrenia (Review). *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2013, Issue 11. Art No:CD003082.
- Jhee SS, Zarosky V, Mohaupt SM, et al. Delayed onset of oculogyric crisis and torticollis with intramuscular haloperidol. *Ann Pharmacother.* 2003;37:1434-7.
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- American College of Emergency Physicians. Use of droperidol in the emergency department. Policy statement. Approved Feb. 2021.
- American Academy of Emergency Medicine. Safety of droperidol use in the emergency department. Clinical policy statement. Sept. 2013.

Medication: Second Generation Antipsychotics

- Wilson MP, Minassian A, Bahramzi M, et al. Despite expert recommendations, second-generation antipsychotics are not often prescribed in the emergency department. *J Em Med.* 46(6):808-13.

Medication: Ketamine

- Green SM, Andolfatto G. Let's "Take 'Em Down" with a ketamine blow dart. *Ann Emerg Med.* 2016 May;67(5):588-90.
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- Riddell J, Tan A, Bengiamin R, et al. Ketamine as a first-line treatment for severely agitated emergency department patients. *Am J Emerg Med.* 2017;35:1000-4.

ACEP Policies

- American College of Emergency Physicians. Use of Droperidol in the Emergency Department. Policy statement. Approved Feb. 2021.

- American College of Emergency Physicians. Clinical policy: Critical Issues in the Diagnosis and Management of the Adult Psychiatric Patient in the Emergency Department. Clinical Policy Statement. Approved Jan. 2017.

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