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CLINICAL INFORMATION SUPPLEMENT

ELEVATING THE STANDARD OF CARE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF CARDIOMETABOLIC RISK FACTORS IN PATIENTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

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FOCUS POINTS

- Serious mental illness is associated with a significantly reduced life expectancy that is mainly attributable to the increased risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD) in this population.
- Some antipsychotics used in the treatment of schizophrenia and bipolar disorder can increase patients' risks for diabetes and CVD.
- Modest changes in key CVD risk factors can have a significant impact on the long-term health of people with and without mental illness.
- Comprehensive treatment plans for patients with serious mental illness include screening for metabolic abnormalities as well as interventions that will help reduce their risk for CVD.

ABSTRACT

Major mental illness, including schizophrenia and bipolar disorder, is associated with increased mortality, primarily due to increased rates of cardiovascular disease (CVD). The risk for CVD, including coronary heart disease and cerebrovascular disease, in this population can be influenced by health systems (ie, access to health care) as well as psychobehavioral (eg, smoking, poor diet, sedentary lifestyle), psychobiological (eg, cortisol dysregulation), and treatment-associated factors (eg, adverse metabolic effects of some medications used to manage psychiatric symptoms). Despite the existence of guidelines for metabolic monitoring and management of CVD risk factors in patients with serious mental illness, uptake and translation of these guidelines into routine care has been limited. This Clinical Information Supplement reviews metabolic risks in patients with schizophrenia and bipolar disorder and discusses ways to overcome obstacles to screening, monitoring, and reducing cardiovascular risk factors in patients with serious mental illness as recommended in consensus guidelines. The goal of recovery for people with severe mental illness needs to combine the concept of general medical health with that of the healthy mind by including screening, education, and intervention for CVD as part of the treatment model for people with persistent mental illness.

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