

P03-588

A NARRATIVE LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE APPLICATIONS OF MEDICAL LABORATORY TESTS IN THE CLINICAL PRACTICE OF PSYCHIATRY: GENERAL AREAS AND SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

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Introduction: Laboratory medical tests have different applications in the field of psychiatry. Some lab tests are done for psychiatric inpatients and outpatients as a routine basic assessment. These tests may be important for diagnosing or ruling out some possible organic causes of psychiatric symptoms and/or co morbidities, or as comparative basic data for further evaluation of some important psychotropic medications effects and/or side effects. Some other important areas of lab tests applications are monitoring serum levels of some psychotropic drugs for evaluation of patients' compliance/noncompliance to drug, for establishing and maintaining effective therapeutic blood levels of medications, for assessment of the etiology of non-responsiveness to pharmacotherapy as well as several other clinical implications.

Methods: Through an extensive and comprehensive literature review in this non-systematic review study, authors have classified the application of laboratory tests in the psychiatry practice from several aspects.

Results: Laboratory tests were classified regarding different aspects like the frequency of prescription by psychiatrists, cost-effectiveness of some routine assessments, legal obligation and claims issues, follow up considerations, psychotropic drugs false/real interactions with some laboratory tests and some false positive /negative laboratory results with great importance in the psychiatry practice as well as several other issues.

Discussion: Both psychiatrists and laboratory practitioners need to have some basic information about each other's field of practice, concerns and needs. This review presents a more clear sense of the interactions and necessary co-operations between psychiatrists and medical laboratory professionals.