

## What role does substance use play in catatonia?

**Dr. Caroff:**

Substance abuse: another big area that people need to consider. Drugs in general, like we said, prescription drugs, or even illicit drugs. When you see somebody come into the ER with catatonia, that should precipitate not an admission to a psychiatric unit, which unfortunately often happens, but consideration of the possible causes of catatonia, among which are a whole host of antipsychotic drugs. Some of these may cause catatonia, although recently people have been reporting that when you get off certain antipsychotics like clozapine, or if you stop benzodiazepines like lorazepam, you can develop a withdrawal catatonia.

But also drugs of abuse, as you said, there are many drugs of abuse — phencyclidine, opioids, and even cannabis — that have been described as causing catatonia. And even a new potential approval and marketing of psychedelic drugs also is a great concern for how it might cause psychosis or even catatonia. It's certainly an important factor to keep in mind if you're treating people with catatonia.