

What are your thoughts on the use of antipsychotics in catatonia?

Jonathan Rogers:

The use of antipsychotics in catatonia is a controversial area and there isn't universal agreement on it. Let me give you what we do know. On the one hand, catatonia is a very strong risk factor for the development of neuroleptic malignant syndrome, a severe and life threatening reaction to antipsychotics. Moreover, sometimes catatonia can be triggered by antipsychotics. That's one side of the story.

On the other side, sometimes catatonia is driven by psychosis, and in order to treat that underlying condition, it's not unreasonable to think that antipsychotics might work. Where I come down is to say antipsychotics aren't a treatment for catatonia itself. They may be a treatment where there is comorbid psychosis, but if they are used, they need to be used cautiously, and you need to be treating the catatonia at the same time.