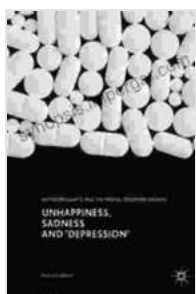


Antidepressants: A Precursor to the Mental Disorder Epidemic?



Antidepressants have been hailed as a miracle cure for mental illness, but a growing body of evidence suggests that they may actually be contributing to the mental disorder epidemic.



Unhappiness, Sadness and 'Depression': Antidepressants and the Mental Disorder Epidemic

by Dean Burnett

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

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In the United States, the use of antidepressants has skyrocketed in recent decades. In 1999, an estimated 10 million Americans were taking antidepressants. By 2014, that number had more than doubled to 27 million.

This dramatic increase in antidepressant use has coincided with a sharp rise in the number of people diagnosed with mental disorders. In 1994, an estimated 18% of Americans had a mental disorder. By 2014, that number had increased to 26%.

Could it be that antidepressants are actually causing the mental disorder epidemic? A growing number of experts believe that this is a possibility.

How Antidepressants Work

Antidepressants work by increasing the levels of certain neurotransmitters in the brain, such as serotonin and norepinephrine. These neurotransmitters are thought to play a role in mood regulation.

While antidepressants can be effective in treating the symptoms of depression and anxiety in the short term, there is evidence that they may actually have harmful effects in the long term.

Antidepressants and the Risk of Mental Disorders

A number of studies have linked antidepressant use to an increased risk of mental disorders, including:

- **Bipolar disorder:** Antidepressants can trigger manic episodes in people with bipolar disorder.
- **Suicide:** Antidepressants have been linked to an increased risk of suicide in children and adolescents.
- **Violence:** Antidepressants have been linked to an increased risk of violence in children and adults.
- **Cognitive impairment:** Antidepressants can impair cognitive function in children and adults.
- **Emotional numbing:** Antidepressants can cause emotional numbing, which can make it difficult to experience pleasure and joy.

It is important to note that not everyone who takes antidepressants will experience these side effects. However, the risk of these side effects is significant enough that it should be considered before taking antidepressants.

A More Cautious Approach to Antidepressant Use

Given the potential risks of antidepressants, it is important to take a more cautious approach to their use.

Antidepressants should only be used to treat severe depression or anxiety that has not responded to other treatments.

Antidepressants should be used at the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible period of time.

Antidepressants should be used in conjunction with other treatments, such as therapy and lifestyle changes.

It is important to monitor patients who are taking antidepressants for side effects, such as mania, suicidality, and violence.

Antidepressants have been hailed as a miracle cure for mental illness, but a growing body of evidence suggests that they may actually be contributing to the mental health epidemic.

It is important to consider the potential risks of antidepressants before taking them.

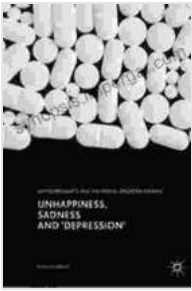
A more cautious approach to antidepressant use should be taken, involving the use of antidepressants only for severe depression or anxiety that has not responded to other treatments.

Antidepressants should be used at the lowest possible dose for the shortest possible period of time.

Antidepressants should be used in conjunction with other treatments, such as therapy and lifestyle changes.

It is important to monitor patients who are taking antidepressants for side effects, such as mania, suicidality, and violence.

By taking a more cautious approach to antidepressant use, we can help to protect our mental health and prevent the mental health epidemic from getting worse.



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