

Ways out of sadness

A series of Dr. Alexander Bernhaut

A modern treatment of depressive mood without pharmaceuticals is not to be thought of. However, lots of people are afraid of these antidepressants.

It is worried about severe side effects up to addiction. Therefore I want to explain what can be expected from antidepressants and on what you have to pay attention when taking in antidepressants to prevent yourself from undesirable aftereffects.

The week before I already talked about the messenger serotonin. He is among other things also responsible for being in a good or bad mood. Depressive people, who do not have to be necessarily sad, but can e.g. be unmotivated or anorexic, are lacking this physical substance, known as neurotransmitter.

How pharmaceuticals take hold

Antidepressants act against this lack. I would like to explain this mechanism on the basis of the "key-principle":

Imagine that you live in a house which has 10 locked doors. Unfortunately you only have 2 keys. 8 doors remain locked. A pharmaceutical against depression provides you with further keys. You have extended access possibilities in your own four walls.

Every patient should be cleared up how antidepressants have to be applied appropriately and safely. Otherwise he/she will take them in inaccurately or even not at all. The person concerned will either not getting better or perceiving negative consequences.

The following guidelines are therefore very important:

- Approx. 2 to 6 weeks can go by until antidepressants start taking hold. So do not give up and do not boost your dose rate!
- It is differentiated between stimulating and soporific moodlifters. The former has to be taken in the morning, the latter in the evening.
- Never stop a therapy by yourself! The specialist determines a step-by-step plan by which the antidepressant is slowly discontinued – provided that the patient is mentally strong for a longer period.
- If a prescribed pharmaceutical does not take hold after some weeks do not hesitate to contact your specialist. He will then find another one which better fits your requirements.
- If there are any side-effects there are three advices to follow: Promptly contact your specialist! Do not boost the dose rate by yourself! Be patient – many side-effects wither after some time without any intervention.
- Addiction (e.g. as with narcotic drugs) does definitely not exist with antidepressants!
- It is not always the case that the pharmaceutical your neighbor takes in is the one that can help you! Your specialist will prescribe you the one that fits your requirements.
- Both alcohol and nicotine (in abundance) have a negative influence on how the pharmaceuticals you take in act.
- Modern antidepressants are normally compatible with most of the other pharmaceuticals. Nevertheless, inform your specialist about which other pharmaceuticals you (have to) take in.

Next week you can read all about the feared Burn-out Syndrome.