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References

Drug treatment of psychiatric symptoms in the context of other conditions CHAPTER 10 References

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Drug class Clinical applications Notes Anticonvulsants³⁴ Aggression and self-injury Some uncontrolled studies supporting sodium valproate³⁵ in LD populations though evidence is not strong and research findings are contradictory. However, valproate remains best supported of the anticonvulsants for mood lability and aggression, partly because of positive studies in non-LD groups.³⁶ Limited studies of lamotrigine, mostly in children, suggest no effect, at least in autism and in the absence of affective instability.²⁷ Data for carbamazepine also unconvincing, but it is still widely used.³⁷ Lithium³⁸ Licensed for the treatment of self-injurious behaviour and aggression Some RCT evidence³⁹ for LD but there have been no studies in this population for many years,³ although there has been one fairly recent positive RCT for its use in aggression in adolescents without developmental impairment.⁴⁰ Experience suggests it can be very helpful in individual cases where other treatments have failed and is possibly underused, though adverse effects can be problematic. Perhaps best considered where there is a sub-syndromal or non-specific 'affective component'. Some authorities suggest that, on close examination, challenging behaviour may occur in the context of very rapid cycling bipolar disorder in some individuals with severe and profound LD and that the diagnosis is easily missed. Some RCT evidence that short-term use is reasonably well tolerated (at 6mg/kg).⁴¹ Methylphenidate Effective in ADHD associated with LD NICE¹³ conducted a meta-analysis

and found clear benefit for methylphenidate (and risperidone and clonidine) in ADHD in the context of LD. Insomnia is common. Naltrexone⁴² Has been used for severe self-injurious behaviour⁴³ Evidence not strong and results are inconsistent. Use may still be an option in severe and intractable cases. One case of successful treatment of kleptomania.⁴⁴ Overall, clinical use has declined of late.⁴⁵ FDA, Food and Drug Administration; LD, learning disability; OCD, obsessive compulsive disorder. Table 10.8 (Continued)

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