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The adverse effects of intensive treatment of chronic schizophrenia

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Abstract

Patients with chronic schizophrenia are highly vulnerable to negative treatment effects. The authors argue that these are often due to intensive treatments and review the literature in four areas: individual psychotherapy, milieu and group therapy, pharmacotherapy, and family therapy. Intensive treatments that produce adverse effects are overstimulating and intrusive; they ignore the patient's need for support, education, and mastery; they attempt to effect rapid or profound changes and neglect long-term adjustment. Furthermore, intensive treatments are often based on psychiatric myths rather than current knowledge. The authors also offer several principles for providing non-intensive treatment.



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