

Extrapyramidal symptoms

Extrapyramidal symptoms (EPS), also known as extrapyramidal side effects (EPSE), are drug-induced movement disorders that include acute and tardive symptoms. These symptoms include dystonia (continuous spasms and muscle contractions), akathisia (motor restlessness), parkinsonism (characteristic symptoms such as rigidity), bradykinesia (slowness of movement), tremor, and tardive dyskinesia (irregular, jerky movements).

Antipsychotics are often discontinued due to inefficacy and intolerable side effects such as extrapyramidal symptoms.

Since it is difficult to measure extrapyramidal symptoms, rating scales are commonly used to assess the severity of movement disorders. The Simpson-Angus Scale (SAS), Barnes Akathisia Rating Scale (BARS), Abnormal Involuntary Movement Scale (AIMS), and Extrapyramidal Symptom Rating Scale (ESRS) are rating scales frequently used for such assessment and are not weighted for diagnostic purposes;^[1] these scales can help physicians weigh the benefit/expected benefit of a medication against the degree of distress which the side effects are causing the patient, aiding in the decision to maintain, reduce, or discontinue the causative medication/s.

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