

THE EVIDENCE FOR MEDICATION

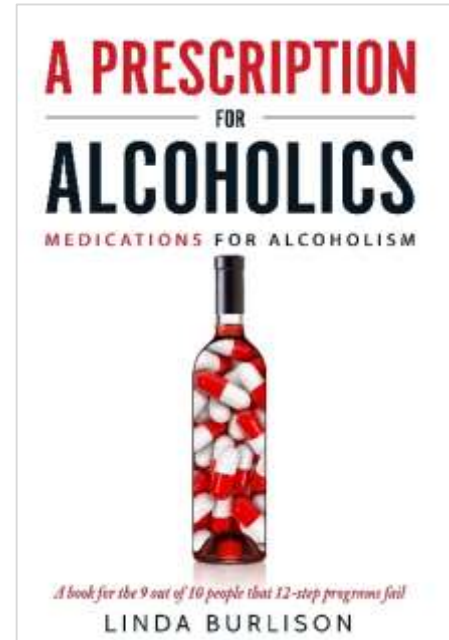
QUOTES FROM 'A PRESCRIPTION FOR ALCOHOLICS'

The following is an excerpt from the book, 'A Prescription for Alcoholics – Medications for Alcoholism'.

The excerpt describes some of the research that exists related to five medications which have been studied for many years for the treatment of alcoholism.

All five are FDA-approved (and also approved in most other countries in the world including Canada and most European countries).

The medications discussed in the excerpt are: acamprosate, baclofen, topiramate, naltrexone and gabapentin.



THE EXCERPT:

"For acamprosate:

There are "more than 450 published original investigations and clinical trials and 1.5 million treated patients which together has resulted in a convincing body of knowledge around acamprosate as an effective treatment for alcohol dependence."¹

The effectiveness of acamprosate is "robustly documented in meta-analyses of available studies...the latter of these was a meta-analysis of 17 studies which included 4087 individuals."²

Acamprosate was found to be superior to placebo in the maintenance of abstinence in a 2015 study in patients with alcohol dependence. The 2015 report cited that "these findings concur with 11 randomized, blinded, placebo-controlled clinical trials conducted in Europe."³

A 2012 analysis included 1317 women and 4794 men from 22 studies within 18 countries and found that acamprosate had "significant beneficial effect across 4 efficacy endpoints—percentage of abstinent days,

the percentage of no heavy drinking days, the rate of complete abstinence and rate of no heavy drinking. Acamprosate also had a high rate of treatment completion and medication compliance.⁴

A meta-analysis of data from 11 European clinical trials that included over 3000 showed that "acamprosate nearly doubled the likelihood of preventing relapse to drinking and increased the probability that patients would remain in treatment by nearly one-third."⁵

In addition, acamprosate is available in at least 30 countries, including the United States, most of Europe, China, Singapore, and Australia, as well as Central and South American countries. It has been prescribed to over "1.5 million persons with alcohol abuse or dependence in those countries with no apparent pattern of serious side effects. European data indicate that the drug has no potential for abuse or rebound effect after discontinuation. European data have also indicated that the drug effectively reduces craving for alcohol and can help maintain abstinence in dependent patients."⁶

You don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand from those quotes that acamprosate should be on every doctor's radar.

Here are some research quotes for the others.

For baclofen:

"The majority of clinical surveys conducted to date—including case reports, retrospective chart reviews, and randomized placebo-controlled studies—suggest the ability of baclofen to suppress alcohol consumption, craving for alcohol, and alcohol withdrawal symptomatology in alcohol-dependent patients."⁷

"The constancy of improvement over the 2-years was remarkable...ninety-two percentage of patients reported that they experienced the craving-suppressing effect of baclofen."⁸

For topiramate:

"There is now solid clinical evidence to support the efficacy of topiramate for the treatment of alcohol dependence."⁹

For naltrexone:

"Meta-analyses of available trials, even when the negative study is included in the analysis, unequivocally support NTX [Naltrexone] efficacy"¹².

"There is abundant evidence supporting the use of naltrexone for the treatment of alcohol dependence (Level A)."⁵

As early as 2002, one report showed that up to 2001 there had already been 14 trials assessing the effectiveness of naltrexone compared with placebo for treating alcoholism, enrolling 2127 subjects, in five countries. It stated, "there is strong evidence that naltrexone significantly reduces alcohol relapses to heavy drinking, the frequency and quantity of alcohol consumption in those who do drink, and alcohol craving."¹⁰

"Naltrexone is one of the most evaluated medications in clinical research for reducing craving. It was superior to placebo in lessening craving, preventing relapse to heavy drinking, and in increasing the percentage of abstinent days."¹¹

"Oral and long-acting injectable naltrexone... are approved for treatment of alcohol dependence. Their availability and consideration of their use in treatment are now standards of high-quality care."¹²

And for gabapentin:

In a review of six randomized controlled clinical trials lasting at least 4 weeks, the four largest trials showed "beneficial effects of gabapentin on at least one alcohol-related outcome measure."¹³

A large, well-managed 6-year study found Gabapentin significantly improved rates of abstinence and no heavy drinking. Abstinence rate was 4.1% in the placebo group ... and 17.0% in the 1800-mg group. The no heavy drinking rate was 22.5% in the placebo group ... and 44.7% in the 1800-mg group.¹⁴

"Gabapentin's effect on drinking outcomes is at least as large or greater than those of existing FDA approved treatments...plus it's the only medication shown to improve sleep and mood in people who are quitting or reducing their drinking, and it's already widely used in primary care."¹⁵

EXCERPT SOURCES

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