

Better Chances for Recovery

Doctors, during their years of studying and practice, are taught almost everything they need to know about their field. However, no matter how expert medical practitioners may be, they still cannot make certain the future outcomes of their treatments. The highest that they can do is make predictions of the possible developments of their patients' conditions. They make a prognosis of their patient's case based on positive and negative factors. A prognosis is an estimation of the extent of development that a patient will achieve.

Take for example the case of people with depression. They are usually prescribed with medications like Prozac, Fluoxetine, or Effexor. However, medications are usually not enough for a long-term, successful recovery of patients with this condition. Usually, doctors advise their patients to undergo psychotherapy sessions to support the positive effects of the medication and further improve the patient's condition for a long-term basis.

Some individuals believe that medications and psychotherapy should be taken or undergone separately. This means that treatments for depression are either-or situations. This particular belief may simply stem from reasons such as financial limitations or personal preferences. However, most medical professionals will suggest that a combined treatment of medications and therapy will result to more stable and long-term outcomes. When a doctor's suggestion and a patient's financial situation or personal opinion does not agree, this usually poses a limitation on the patient's condition. This is not to say that doctors are always right about their suggestions, which is why it is also usually necessary to obtain secondary opinions from other medical experts. However, most suggestions made by physicians are based on their evaluation of how their patient's conditions can be best improved or treated. They usually set goals for their patients which, by the way, should always be discussed, planned, and set with the consent of the patient himself/herself.

One possible reason why doctors prefer simultaneous treatment administration of medications and psychotherapy is because medications alone, when used as treatment for depression, have a high tendency of relapse or recurrence of depression upon its termination. Some studies indicate that regression of previously treated patients back to their depressed situations are prevented and their chances of relapsing are lessened when they undergo psychotherapy sessions together with or after their use of anti-depressant medications. Also, the risk of committing suicides among the population suffering from depression is managed better by psychotherapy. Lastly, through undergoing therapy sessions, individuals with depression learn how to deal with stress, disappointments, loss, and other psychosocial issues that usually trigger or worsen their condition.

Thus, even if doctors cannot assure a patient's full and successful recovery after treatment, they are still able to plan out certain treatment strategies to increase the patient's chances of achieving this goal. Sometimes, medications like Prozac in the case of individuals with depression may not suffice alone. Supporting treatment approaches and strategies are, therefore, incorporated in the plan to make the patient's prognosis better. The only disadvantages in this situation are the patient's financial limitations as well as some of their personal preferences.

About the Author

Melai Karaan, a well known writer on Health and Fitness who is active advocate on the Awareness of Health Consciousness. Did you find this article helpful and interesting? Know more and visit us at [Buy Prozac](#)

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