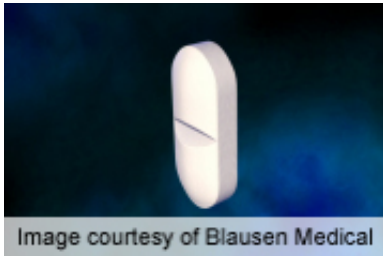


# Psychotropic drugs commonly prescribed to children with ASD

21 October 2013



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(HealthDay)—Psychotropic medications, singly and in combination, are commonly prescribed for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD), according to research published online Oct. 21 in *Pediatrics*.

Donna Spencer, Ph.D., of OptumInsight in Eden Prairie, Minn., and colleagues reviewed claims data from 2001 to 2009 for 33,565 children with ASD to assess rates and predictors of psychotropic use.

The researchers found that 64 percent of children with ASD had filled a prescription for at least one psychotropic medication. Polypharmacy was evident, with concurrent medication fills across at least two drug classes in 35 percent and across at least three classes in 15 percent. Factors associated with greater risk of psychotropic use and multiclass polypharmacy included older age; psychiatrist visit; and evidence of comorbid conditions such as seizures, attention-deficit disorders, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or depression.

"Despite minimal evidence of the effectiveness or appropriateness of multidrug treatment of ASD, [psychotropic medications](#) are commonly used, singly and in combination, for ASD and its co-occurring conditions," the authors write.

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