

GABA Gone Wild

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Sean Nugent R2 FRCPC EM

Alcohol Withdrawal

- Involves decreased GABA activity and increased glutamate activity
- Treatment should focus on the above neurochemistry
- Benzodiazepines first line, with diazepam first choice unless cirrhosis or elderly
- Propofol, phenobarbital, ketamine as second line agents in severe patients

Intrathecal Baclofen Withdrawal

- Suspect the diagnosis with patient with intrathecal baclofen catheter and altered mental status
- Investigate catheter related issues with x-rays or CT
- Investigate pump related issues with pump programmer
- Avoid oral baclofen due to inability to get same concentrations in the CSF vs catheter

GHB Withdrawal

- GHB has a short half life so beware of withdrawal within 1-6 hours
- Patients can have prolonged, unpredictable clinical course even with appropriate treatment