

What is Self Injurious Behavior (SIB): Can we treat it?

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A.M.B.E.R. clinic
Albuquerque Multidisciplinary Behavioral Evaluation for Recovery and
Resiliency

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Overview

- **Defining SIB**
- **Challenge of reliable statistics**
- **Medication strategies**
- **Working with incomplete information**

Definition(s)

- **Self Injurious Behavior (SIB)**
 - not ONE thing
 - Usually repetitive
 - Multiple triggers
- **Point of View**
 - Self -- Other

Definitions

- **Purpose**
 - **Distraction**
 - **Endorphin release**
 - **Automatism**
- **Habitual response**
 - **Anxiety; Boredom**

Prevalence

- **Assessing risky behavior**
- **Obsessions → Stereotypy → self-injury**
- **Medical underpinnings**
 - **Lesch-Nyhan (hypoxanthine-guanine phosphoribosyltransferase HPRT deficiency)**
 - **Prader Willi Syndrome (deletions chr 15q11-13)**
 - **Factitious disorder**
 - **Choking game**
 - **Psychosis (schizophrenia)**
 - **Congenital Insensitivity to Pain with Anhidrosis (CIPA)**
 - **Ekbom syndrome (delusional parasitosis)**

Animal observations

- **High rate SIB in captive primates (10%)**
- **Stressors ~ increase SIB**
- **long-acting naltrexone in rhesus macaques**
- **behavioral responses by human handlers decreased self-biting and head-banging in olive baboons**
- **L-tryptophan (100mg/d) decreased wound area and severity in small-eared bushbabies**

Clinical challenges

- **Often non-verbal individuals**
- **Theories (assumptions?)**
 - **increased pain threshold**
 - **hyperalgesia**
 - **GERD**
 - **compulsions (Autism Spectrum D/O)**

Medications...

- **Naltrexone**
- **SSRI**
 - Fluoxetine in primates decr SIB ~ decr plt serotonin and decr CSF 5HIAA.
- **Beta-blocker**
- **Is there a role for antipsychotics?**

Medication/therapy

- **Tricyclics**
- **Sleep aides?**
- **Lamotrigine** (for skin picking)
 - 12.5 – 300 mg/d: subset with lack cogn. flexibility
- **ECT?**
- **Behavioral supports: “invisible” reinforcers can be transformed to positive behavioral supports**

Treatment

- **Micronutrients for ASD**
 - **decr. SIB, better health outcomes**
- **Co-morbid BPD**
 - **predictors self-harm**
 - **female, severity dysphoria, severity dissociation, major depression, h/o child sexual abuse, sexual assault as adult**
 - **DBT; CBT**

Multidisciplinary Approach

- **Behavioral Assessment**
 - **Functional**
 - **Applied Behavior Analysis**
 - **Positive Behavior Supports**
 - **Labeling**
- **Incomplete information**
 - **Different responses and learning in different contexts**
 - **Premature closure due to wording**

Impotence in Providers

- **Multiple sources for self-injury**
- **Develop ongoing strategy for re-assessment**
- **Communication from increased network
(create dodecahedron of observations...)**

Summary

- **SIB multi-faceted**
- **Poor specificity of treatments for complex behaviors**
- **Prevalence, severity probably under-reported**
- **Continually assess for medical co-morbidity**