

# Clozaril - The Miracle Drug: What are Doctors So Afraid of?

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## INTRODUCTION

When I was diagnosed with Bipolar disorder in 1995, I was initially prescribed only Lithium. For me, it was like taking water, nothing changed. I remained manic, experiencing hallucinations and delusions. In a normal human being brain waves travel in a straight line, but in those of us who suffer Bipolar Disorder or Schizophrenia, they go haywire.

My second doctor prescribed Risperidone. The hallucinations ceased, but it felt like black tar clogged my brain. I thought to myself, "If I have to live with a mind like this, I don't want to live anymore." Perpetually manic, I have never experienced depression. That is why I can address mania better than most. Too, I've learned through the years, while doctors have never experienced what those of us with

comes to assessing the drugs doctors have prescribed me.

Building. On Risperidone, my mind stayed clogged and in its lowest

through when we weren't looking. If I missed any bomb parts, that

feel these muscles. So, I would push, push, and push until I entered

again. I would be sitting on the gate and more people than I can count would pass and go, "Smile," but I would just think to myself, "I don't feel like smiling".

Seroquel came next. My mind went blank, literally. My only thought was repeatedly, "I can't think! What am I going to think about? I have to think, but I can't think!" My brain refused to shut down entirely so I could rest it, yet no thought what-so-ever entered. It made me crazy. So, I began to count. I slept as much as I could, but found myself awake at 3 am. As a result, I was forced to get on disability.

Thanks, be to God, my brain did a 360 when I was asked to participate in a 3-year study on Clozaril, headed by Doctor William Rogers at the Andrews Center in Tyler, Texas. I need to emphasize I was on the actual Clozaril, not the generic Clozapine which acts differently with me, though I am the exception, not the norm. For the first time in my life, I felt normal again. I met with a psychologist two or more times per week, answering his four to five-page questionnaire, then Doctor Rogers grilled me. On 500 MGs, for the first few hours Clozaril made me incredibly drunk, so I took the med before bedtime. By morning I felt great, my formal self before mania. My current doctor, Dr. Steven Danley, gradually lowered my dosage to 200 MGs and we found that was not only all I needed mentally, the side effects disappeared. If I woke during the night, I now longer experienced

the drunkenness. Constipation disappeared. Around 1 pm I was no longer lethargic unless I ate and a little coffee took care of that. Now, I alternate between 100 MGs and 200 MGs, nightly. Any night I don't take my meds, I don't sleep.

Clozaril carries a stigma with doctors and I've tried to learn why. Patients are required to get first weekly, then bi-weekly and finally monthly CBCs, but believe me, it's worth the effort. I have been on the medication for more than 15 years and not once has my white blood cell count been low. Because the low blood cell count frightens many doctors, with the test they will be alerted should that happen. Myocarditis occurs in 1% of patients. It is recommended that ECG

always be ill, so fat refused to listen to me when I begged for my med. Not only that, he worked at Andrews Center during the study! At first I was told I couldn't get a different doctor, but ultimately learned I could.

I told my new doctor, and current one, Dr. Steven Danley, that only Clozaril worked in my case. So, he said simply, "Then, we'll put you back on Clozaril." The pharmacist filled it with its generic Clozapine. Insurance companies require pharmacist to substitute the generic. Unlike most patients my body reacts differently to Clozapine. I do not want doctors to rule out Clozaril should this happen to a patient. Twice I tried Clozapine and experienced the same reaction. Whereas Clozaril brings me down from a high, d Clo in an altercation in a

mental facility in Longview, Texas. My daughter, who lives in Los Angeles, couldn't find me. The police and every mental institution in the state told her the law prevented them from revealing my location. This is a terribly frightening for both the patient and the family. Frantic, she came to Texas and searched for me for more than two months, taking a leave of absence from work. I had no extra set of clothes or money. Finally, someone broke that law and told her

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