

## **Psychedelics**

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Psychedelics or serotonergic hallucinogens have been used thousands of years for religious and therapeutic purposes. They are a class of psychoactive substances that produce significant alterations in perception and mood, allowing the user to experience sensations that are otherwise unreal. Used in earlier cultures for socio-cultural and ritual contexts, they nowadays, have displayed therapeutic potential in disorders. These hallucinogens can be utilized in the treatment of resistant depression and suicidal ideation. They may contribute to the resolution of different addictions – for example, alcoholism-and other demanding psychiatric disorders like obsessive compulsive disorder. Additionally, they aid in promoting the pharmacopeia for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Psychedelics – like LSD, DMT- react as agonists or partial agonists for brain serotonin 5-hydroxytryptamine 2A receptors. These drugs can be plant derived or man-made and are known to induce a positive mood almost immediately compared to other anti-depressants. They hinder communications between the brain and spinal cord impacting body temperature, mood, hunger etc. Though much research is being conducted in the effects of psychedelics in different areas like schizophrenia and psychosis, much controversy still surrounds these drugs. There decreased addictiveness and non-potent somatic side effects could potentially lead to their constant abuse by the user. Abusing psychedelics over a long period of time could instigate the appearance of somatic side effects, for example, an increase in heart rate and blood pressure, nausea and vomiting etc. Overall, psychedelics are progressively being recognized as a promising treatment for different psychiatric disorders, anxiety and depression. Used socially throughout centuries, these drugs are finally being looked into as a possible source for therapy. But much insight is still required about their definite effects and side effects.