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Study of effects of SSRI on stages of sexual function in Iranian patients with major depressive disorder

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Objective: Depression is one of the most common psychiatric disorders in the world. Prevalence in lifetime is 15% among men and 25% among women. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), tricyclic antidepressants and monoamine oxidase inhibitor antidepressants are often used for depression, with their own side effects. This study was carried out since little information on sexual dysfunction due to these medications, is available in Iran.

Methods: This observational cross-sectional study included 100 patients attending University or private psychiatry clinic, who after psychiatric interview based on Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders fourth edition criteria, were considered depressed. These patients had no history of depression, sexual dysfunction or use of psychiatric medications. Sexual functioning of patients was evaluated at the start of the study, and after 2, 4 and 8 weeks of treatment. Data were evaluated using SPSS software and t and χ^2 tests.

Results: A total of 75% of patients reported sexual dysfunction: 66. 7% of men and 79. 7% of women. A total of 74. 1% of patients on fluvoxamine, 100% on fluoxetine, 75% on sertraline, 71. 4% on citalopram and 100% on paroxetine reported sexual dysfunction. The most frequent sexual dysfunction was difficulty with orgasm, which affected 41. 17% of women and 33. 33% of men.

Conclusion: The incidence of sexual dysfunction among users of SSRIs was highest in patients on fluvoxamine, but this was not statistically significant. Minimization of sexual side effects should be an essential consideration when prescribing antidepressants.

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