

## Fluoxetine/sibutramine interaction

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**Serotonin syndrome: case report**

A 58-year-old man with agoraphobia and panic disorder treated with fluoxetine experienced serotonin syndrome after weight loss therapy with sibutramine [Reductil] was added to his treatment regimen.

The man, who had been receiving daily fluoxetine 80–120mg for 10 years, started receiving additional sibutramine 15 mg/day, and experienced unrest, nervousness, hand tremor and worsening of his pre-existing hypertension 1 week later.

Amlodipine was added to the man's existing antihypertensive therapy. However, he developed sleeping problems and worsening of his panic disorder; promethazine was initiated without success. He discontinued sibutramine of his own accord, and was hospitalised about 1 week later, 8 weeks after sibutramine initiation. Immediately before admission, he had a fluoxetine concentration of 1283 nmol/L and a desmethylfluoxetine concentration of 1870 nmol/L (therapeutic range 289–1156 nmol/L). He was fully oriented, fearful and agitated on presentation, with reduced concentration and strong psychomotor unrest. Thought processes were complex, and perception and short-term memory appeared mildly impaired. Physical examination revealed a 173cm tall man weighing 100kg, with a HR of 96/min and a BP of 160/90mm Hg. Laboratory investigations were only remarkable for a triglyceride level of 196 mg/dL and a urea level of 56 mg/dL. Fluoxetine was then decreased to 40 mg/day, and his symptoms completely resolved within 14 days, and his promethazine dosage was reduced. On discharge, his BP and HR were normal.

**Author comment:** *We suspect that the combination of both drugs led to an increased sibutramine concentration. The high fluoxetine dosage can be considered a risk factor. After discontinuation of sibutramine and reduction of his daily fluoxetine dosage to 40mg, his symptoms completely resolved within 3 weeks.*

Riedl H, et al. Case report: Serotonin syndrome associated with a co-medication from fluoxetine and sibutramine. *Psychopharmakotherapie* 16: 251-252, No. 6, Nov-Dec 2009 [German] - Germany 803006589