

# **SIDE EFFECT OR THERAPY EFFECT?**

**D. Lovrović<sup>1</sup> & V. Matković<sup>2</sup>**

*<sup>1</sup>Psychiatric hospital Lopača, Rijeka, Croatia  
dlovrovic@vip.hr*

*<sup>2</sup>Psychiatric clinic of KBC Rijeka, Rijeka, Croatia*

On the basis of experience and clinical practice, it seems that fluoxetine therapy results in considerable weight loss. The significant weight loss in the course of fluoxetine treatment will be evaluated.

Within the period of one year, body weight expressed in absolute value and BMI in a group of patients treated with fluoxetine has been evaluated. The aforesaid referred to outpatients who were not hospitalised in the relevant period. Measurements were taken at the beginning of treatment, one month later, three months later, six months later and a year later. Diagnoses varied from depressive disorder and anxiety-depressive disorder to anxiety disorder. Some patients underwent psychotherapy once a week, each seance lasted 45 minutes.

Weight loss was recorded for the majority of patients. After an initial weight loss, there is a tendency to gradually increase body weight in the course of treatment. Nevertheless, BMI is significantly lower in the observed period than at the beginning of treatment.

Patients were monitored only incidentally and by observing one variable - body weight, i.e. BMI. The subject side effect of fluoxetine that is recognized and described can be explained by agonist effect on 2C serotonin receptors connected with hunger mechanism and weight regulation. Although a small group was observed, it is interesting that the person with greatest BMI was also the person who demonstrated the greatest decrease of BMI. Even though, in narrower sense, the side effect of a medicine is in question, we think that it can be purposely used in order to improve compliance. Regardless of the fact that the side effect is in question, this side effect is neither unwanted nor harmful. In the future, observing risk factors for cardiovascular complications (cholesterol, triglycerides) could be considered since those factors were not evaluated in this study.