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Effects of SSRI medication on heart rate and blood pressure in individuals with hypertension and depression



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Objective: The objective of the study was to test the role of escitalopram on blood pressure and heart rate of individuals with hypertension and depression.

Methods: A total of 30 individuals participated in this study and the individuals were being treated for hypertension and were diagnosed with major depression. Escitalopram (10-20 mg) was administered to 15 individuals, while the other 15 received placebo. These individuals were followed for eight weeks with regular monitoring of blood pressure and heart rate. Scores on the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale were evaluated within the first, second, fourth and eighth weeks of the study onset.

Results: Comparing with placebo, heart rate was lower in the escitalopram group (66.79 ± 9.85 vs 74.10 ± 9.52 bpm, $P=0.044$). There was not a significant decrease of systolic blood pressure (140.80 ± 16.48 vs 139.61 ± 18.92 mmHg, $P=0.85$) and diastolic blood pressure (80.55 ± 12.64 vs 80.18 ± 16.36 mmHg, $P=0.94$).

Conclusion: Escitalopram decreases heart rate but not blood pressure in individuals with hypertension and depression.

Biography

Marcello Finardi Peixoto obtained his medicine degree from Federal University of Sao Paulo Medical School. His Residency training was in Psychiatry at Santa Casa of Sao Paulo. He received a Master of Science degree in Nephrology from Federal University of Sao Paulo Medical School, where he also did a specialization in Psychopharmacology. He joined a Scientific Initiation Program during his Medical training when he published his first two original articles. He has been practicing since 2003 in his own private practice center. His current interests include mental disorders, particularly mood and anxiety disorders and its relation to general medical diseases.

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