

## Medicines Management & Pharmacy Services (MMPS)

# Serotonin Syndrome

Rare but serious syndrome caused by excess serotonin in the central nervous system usually as a result of patients concurrently taking two or more drugs, which affect serotonin.

Prompt treatment is required, therefore, early and accurate diagnosis is needed.

With prompt treatment symptoms can resolve in 24 hours.

### Symptoms

Agitation

Confusion

Fever

Excessive sweating

Diarrhoea

Abnormal muscle movements

### Drugs reported to cause serotonin syndrome

MAOIs

SSRIs

SNRIs – venlafaxine, duloxetine

St John's Wort

Some opioids – tramadol, pethidine

Amphetamines

Linezolid

### Treatment

Discontinue all serotonergic drugs

Symptomatic support eg cooling blankets and fans

Cyproheptadine, ( a non-specific 5HT blocker), 4 – 8 mg orally repeated every 2- 4 hours may be required

Further information is available at: [What is serotonin syndrome and which medicines cause it? -](#)

## References

- (1) Bazire; Psychotropic Drug Directory 2010
- (2) Could you recognise serotonin syndrome?; Sharp J et al; The Pharmaceutical Journal; vol 290; p. 17-18; Jan 2013

For further information: [www.choiceandmedication.org/leedsandyorkpft](http://www.choiceandmedication.org/leedsandyorkpft)

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## Provenance

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