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A naturalistic study of paroxetine in premenstrual syndrome: efficacy and side-effects during ten cycles of treatment.

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Eighteen women with severe premenstrual syndrome (PMS) (premenstrual dysphoric disorder, PMDD) were treated openly with paroxetine for 10 consecutive menstrual cycles. Dosage was flexible (5-30 mg/day); also, the patients were free to chose between continuous medication and medication in the luteal phase only. The rating of premenstrual irritability, depressed mood, increase in appetite, and anxiety/tension was markedly lower during treatment with paroxetine than before, and this reduction in symptomatology appeared unabated for the entire treatment period. Sedation, dry mouth, and nausea were common side-effects but declined during the course of the trial; in contrast, reduced libido and anorgasmia, which were reported by almost 50% of the participants, were not improved with time. The results indicate that the beneficial effects as well as the sexual side-effects of serotonin reuptake inhibitors persist unchanged for at least 10 consecutive cycles of treatment.

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