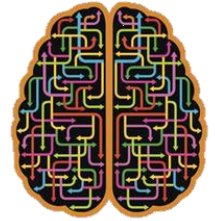


Serotonin Syndrome



Serotonin Syndrome is a rare side effect of some medicines, it happens when the brain gets too much serotonin. It can give you a

fever, sickness, confusion, and muscle twitches. It can be serious unless treated quickly. **You may get similar symptoms with infections, substance abuse or withdrawal symptoms, or with antipsychotics**, but these aren't Serotonin Syndrome. The main symptoms are as follows:

- Feeling confused, agitated or restless
- Sweating, fever, shivers or shakes
- Diarrhea
- Muscle twitches
- Fast heartbeat
- Feeling sick
- Seizures or fits

Most cases are mild and will feel similar to the flu

What Causes Serotonin Syndrome?

Serotonin Syndrome most often happens a few days or so after:

- An increase in the dose of a serotonin drug e.g. an SSRI such as escitalopram
- Starting another medicine
- An overdose e.g. taking a double dose in error

The most common medicines are:

- SSRIs and similar medicines e.g. citalopram, escitalopram, fluoxetine (and for 6 weeks after stopping), paroxetine, sertraline, venlafaxine, trazodone, duloxetine, tramadol, St. John's wort
- Some tricyclics (e.g. clomipramine)
- Some MAOIs (e.g. tranylcypromine)
 - Linezolid
- Some illicit drugs e.g. ecstasy, amphetamines
 - Opioids e.g. buprenorphine.
 - Triptans (e.g. sumatriptan, almotriptan, naratriptan) for migraines may be a problem

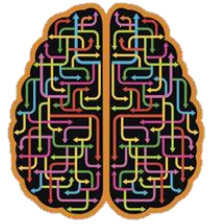
There are international warnings about taking a triptan and an SSRI or similar antidepressants. Together they might cause serotonin syndrome, but it seems to be very rare with triptans. You can still buy a triptan if you have migraines, but you should be careful and know the symptoms of serotonin syndrome.



Serotonin Syndrome

Fact Sheet

What are the main treatments for Serotonin Syndrome?



Get medical treatment quickly, as other medicines can help.

There are 2 main treatments:

1. Stop any drugs that might boost serotonin:

This is usually enough for most cases.

2. Treat the symptoms:

- Keeping cool with fans
- Medical treatment e.g. lorazepam to help calming, cyproheptadine (an antihistamine) to block the effect on serotonin receptors

What should I do if I think I might have or might get Serotonin Syndrome?

- If you think you have the symptoms, inform your prescriber in the next few hours
- If you can't do this, you may need to go to a hospital A&E department
- Tell your prescriber if you might have had serotonin syndrome before

Contact numbers:

Warrington Adult ADHD service - 01925 387058

NHS England - 111 or 999 for emergencies

