

## How Community Pharmacists can help patients on Antidepressants at risk for suicides and sexual dysfunction

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Widespread use of antidepressant drugs has led to suicidal attempts and sexual dysfunction among adolescent psychiatric patients.<sup>[1]</sup> Patients usually complain for delayed ejaculation and libido loss with SSRIs group specifically.<sup>[2]</sup> Although in premature ejaculation these drugs have significant impact, but still they are risky for many patients; if they are not well aware of the considerable side effects these drugs carry along. Adolescents are usually victimized by such side effects like suicidal intents, non-compliance, drug denial and this may ultimately result in behavioral disorders.<sup>[3]</sup> Educating the patient and his relatives regarding these potential side effects is very necessary for the pharmacist.<sup>[4]</sup> The mortality rate of adolescents with depression is highly contributed by these side effects. The foremost culprit for adolescent mortality was tricyclic and SSRI's use in the US.<sup>[2,4]</sup> So application of appropriate actions is need of the day while prescribing these drugs.<sup>[5-6]</sup>

In under-developed areas like Peshawar, sexual dysfunction in male teenagers is considered as a 'felony' or against customs and ethics issue. So children mostly prefer to hide such problems or hesitate to share it with parents. They are usually tormented, tortured and laughed at, if they share

such issue with someone. So those depressed teenagers who are hospitalized or kept in rehabilitation centers are the actual targets of all these. They lead a terrible life and suffer a lot as they do not have enough courage to unveil their condition. To avoid these matters, appropriate counseling and knowledge regarding health, disease, treatment and therapeutic outcomes should be encouraged for such patient.<sup>[7]</sup>

### Role of a Community Pharmacist

It is one of the major role of the community pharmacist to educate the patient and the family members about the undesired effects of venlafaxine which will definitely avoid further additive factors to the patient depression and fear. In this regard, following steps should be followed:

- Patient should be completely educated about the disease so that he/she don't worry much about the signs, symptoms and the consequences of the illness.
- Patient should be well aware of the therapy and its aims so that he/she do cooperate through the therapy and show good adherence to the medication.



- Inform the patient fully about the undesired harmful effects of the drug incase to avoid any sort of additive stress, depression or confusion.
- In case of married victims, the couple should be well-informed and counseled to avoid any disturbance in their martial relations. The partner should be educated to cooperate through the course or therapy.
- Physicians are not held responsible to conduct these guidance sessions due to shortage of time, and as this is the duty of the community pharmacist to educate the patients enough to diminish the risks of non-suicidal self-damage and suicidal intentions among the teenagers. This will also contribute towards the improved quality of life and make the treatment more effective and efficient.

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