

The effects of a Traditional Persian Medicinal herbal syrup on depression and anxiety, a double blind randomized trial

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Abstract

Major depressive disorder (MDD) with anxious distress is a chronic and disabling disorder. While conventional medicine is frequently accompanied by low patients' compliance due to drug-related side effects; in Persian medicine the lavender-dodder syrup is one of the potential recommended formulas for such disorders. The aim of this study was to compare the effects of combined herbal syrup with citalopram in MDD with anxious distress.

This 6-week, double-blind, randomized, clinical trial was carried out in a psychiatric outpatient clinic. Patients in group A received citalopram tablet 20 mg/d plus placebo syrup 5 mL every 12 h, and patients in group B received herbal syrup 5 mL every 12 h plus placebo tablets once daily.

Primary outcome measures consisted of depression/anxiety severity were measured by Hamilton Depression/Anxiety Rating Scales, evaluated at the beginning of the study and weeks 3 and 6.

Fifty-six participants with MDD and anxious distress were randomly assigned to two groups. Mean depression scores signifi-

cantly decreased in citalopram and herbal groups at weeks 3 and 6 (time effect: $P < 0.001$), although the observed changes were not significantly different between the groups (intervention effect: $P = 0.61$). In terms of mean anxiety scores, there were no significant differences between the two groups at week 3 ($P = 0.75$). However, at the end of week 6, the observed decrease was significantly higher in herbal syrup group than the citalopram group (intervention effect: $P = 0.007$). We can conclude that this herbal syrup is an effective and tolerable supplement in treating MDD with anxious distress.

Biography

Toktam Sadat Firoozeai is a PhD candidate studying Traditional Persian Medicine at Tehran University of medical Sciences. She obtained her MD degree from Isfahan University of medical Sciences. Ranked first place in PhD entrance exam for Traditional Persian Medicine. She is motivated to help translate the science of Traditional Persian Medicine (TPM) into understandable information for patients. Focused on improving patient outcomes by implementing traditional Persian medicine in lifestyle modalities. Her areas of interest are research in mental health, neurology and herbal medicine.

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