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A Double Blind Comparative Trial of Nomifensin and Desimipramine in Depression

Relationship between Treatment and Phenylethylamine Excretion

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Summary. The effect of nomifensin (Hoechst 36984), a synthetic psychotropic drug whose structure differs from MAO inhibitors and tricyclics, was studied in a double blind comparative trial with desimipramine in patients with various depressive syndromes. Forty-three patients (23 in the nomifensin group and 20 in the desimipramine group) were studied for 6 weeks. Clinical follow-up was done with the Wittenborn scale (WPRS), Hamilton's rating scale for depression (HRS), Zung's scale (SDS), and the PEN inventory. The average daily dose was nomifensin 84 mg and desimipramine 76 mg. Changes in HRS, WPRS and SDS showed statistically significant improvement with both treatments. A moderate anxiolytic effect was found in the nomifensin group, whereas medication had to be discontinued in two desimipramine-treated patients because of its drive-enhancing effect. Urinary phenylethylamine excretion rose in 2 out of 8 patients after 5 weeks of treatment with nomifensin.

Key words: Nomifensin, desimipramine, depression, antidepressant drugs, phenylethylamine excretion.