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## THE EFFECT OF LAVANDULA ANGUSTIFOLIA IN THE TREATMENT OF DEPRESSION

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**Background and aim:** Medical plants have been used for centuries as a medicinal agent in treatment of depression and anxiety. The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of the *lavandula officinalis* on depression in patients using citalopram.

**Methods:** This clinical trial study was performed in Hajar hospital, Shahrekord, Iran. In this study eighty patients randomly allocated into two groups (40 patients in each group).

Patients who complained from depression were studied during a two-month double-blind study. In control group, patients were given 20 mg citalopram twice daily plus placebo and case group were treated with 5g arial part of dried *Lavandula officinalis* and citaloperam (20 mg, twice per day). After 4 and 8 weeks, patients were followed for evaluations of their depression and complications. Depression severity was scored using standard Hamilton's depression questionnaire. Data were analyzed using Chi square and Paired-t test.

**Results:** After 1 month treatment, mean depression score in case and control groups were  $15.2 \pm 3.6$  and  $17.5 \pm 3.5$ , respectively ( $P < 0.05$ ). After 2 months the mean score of depression in case and control groups was  $14.8 \pm 4$  and  $16.8 \pm 4.6$ , respectively ( $P < 0.01$ ). The most common side effects in two groups were confusion and dry mouth, which were not significantly different between two groups.

**Conclusion:** *Lavandula officinalis* has a positive effect on depressed patients and may be useful to decrease the severity of depression in patients using other antidepressants.