Fluoxetine History and Information

Fluoxetine (Prozac) targets Serotonin, the neurotransmitter found primarily in the gastrointestinal tract, blood platelets and central nervous system, and is thought to contribute to feelings of happiness. Serotonin is critical in the regulation of mood, appetite and sleep patterns, but also used in memory and learning. The widespread function of Serotonin helps to explain the extensive list of side effects and the Prozac Discontinuation Syndrome (withdrawal). Fluoxetine (Prozac) has the longest half-life of any antidepressant, meaning it stays in the body for an extended period of time. Many patients do not realize they are in withdrawal as the symptoms may appear weeks after stopping the drug. A gradual taper is recommended. Contact Us if you need help tapering off of Fluoxetine or have questions.

Prozac (Fluoxetine) failed in clinical trials as an antihypertensive medication and again as an obesity drug. While it did not show improvement for patients hospitalized as psychotic and actually made some patients worse, Prozac found its home as an antidepressant after it improved the mood of five mildly depressed volunteers. It was then launched as an antidepressant in 1988 and was responsible for more than one-quarter of Eli Lilly Pharmaceutical's income. The marketing strategy of providing a cure for an illness was born by Interbrand, the world's leading branding company (Microsoft, Nikon, Nintendo, Sony) and the name Prozac was chosen because it was short and had a positive and professional sound. Lilly printed 8 million brochures highlighting the symptoms of depression with a treatment option and patients began asking for the drug by name. It was the success of Prozac that created the market with similar antidepressants called SSRIs (Selective Serotonin-Reuptake Inhibitors).

Prozac (Fluoxetine) erased the stigma of depression but brought with it a movement to advertise depression and provide drugs to treat it. In 2001 Prozac lost its patent protection and Eli Lilly lost $35 million of its market value as generic versions were released.

Prescriptions for Fluoxetine have increased 23% for children under the age of two. U.S. Experts warn that the steep rise comes in spite of no published research investigating the effectiveness and potential health risks for young children.

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*The statements on this website have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The products and labels mentioned / sold are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease or illness.
*Because prescription medications can cause severe withdrawal reactions, do not stop taking any medication without first consulting your physician. The decision to taper any medication should be discussed with your doctor and done with their consent and support.