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Authors: Thaahesh Tharmaraja, Daniel Stahl, Christopher W. P. Hopkins, Shanta J. Persaud, Peter M. Jones, Khalida Ismail, and Calum Moulton

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The association between selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and glycemia: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials

Thahesh Tharmaraja BSc (hons)¹, Daniel Stahl PhD²,
Christopher W. P. Hopkins MRCPsych³, Shanta J. Persaud PhD⁴, Peter M. Jones PhD⁴,
Khalida Ismail PhD¹, Calum D. Moulton MRCPsych¹

¹Department of Psychological Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London, London, SE5 9RJ, UK

²Department of Biostatistics and Health Informatics, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London, London, SE5 9RJ, UK

³Psychological Medicine Service, Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust, Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading, RG1 5AN, UK

⁴Department of Diabetes, School of Life Course Sciences, Faculty of Life Sciences & Medicine, King's College London, London, SE1 1UL

Corresponding author:

Dr Calum Moulton, Department of Psychological Medicine, Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience, King's College London, London, SE5 9RJ, UK
Email: calum.moulton@kcl.ac.uk; tel.: 0207 8485657

Abstract

Objective:

Individual studies have reported conflicting effects of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) on glycaemia. We systematically reviewed the effects of SSRIs on glycemia and whether metabolic and psychological factors moderated these effects.

Methods:

We systematically searched for placebo-controlled randomised controlled trials (RCTs) investigating the effect of SSRIs on glycaemia (fasting blood glucose or HbA1c) as a primary or secondary outcome. Random-effects meta-analysis was conducted to compute an overall treatment effect. Meta-regression tested whether depression, type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance, treatment duration and weight loss moderated treatment effects.

Results:

Sixteen RCTs ($n=835$) were included and glycaemia was usually a secondary outcome. Overall, SSRIs improved glycaemia versus placebo (*pooled effect size (ES)* = -0.34, 95% confidence interval (CI) -0.48 to -0.21; $p < 0.001$, $I^2=0\%$). Individually, fluoxetine ($ES=-0.29$, 95% CI -0.54 to -0.05; $p=0.018$) and escitalopram/citalopram ($ES=-0.33$, 95% CI -0.59 to -0.07; $p=0.012$) outperformed placebo, but paroxetine ($ES=-0.19$, 95% CI -0.58 to 0.19; $p=0.33$) did not. Results were similar in populations selected for depression as those not. Across studies, baseline insulin resistance ($p=0.46$), treatment duration ($p=0.47$), diabetes status ($p=0.41$) and weight loss ($p=0.93$) did not moderate changes. Heterogeneity for all analyses was non-significant.

Conclusions:

SSRIs appear to have an association with improvement in glycaemia, which is not moderated by depression status, diabetes status or change in weight across studies. Future powered trials with longer treatment duration are needed to confirm these findings.

Registration:

PROSPERO ID: CRD4201809239

Keywords:

Diabetes; depression; insulin resistance; systematic review, meta-analysis, meta-regression.

Abbreviations:

CI = confidence interval; ES = effect size; HOMA = Homeostatic Model Assessment; RCT = randomised controlled trial; SMD = standardised mean difference; SSRI = selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors.

Introduction

Depressive symptoms are twice as common in people with type 2 diabetes compared to the general population and are associated with increased risk of diabetes complications and premature mortality (1, 2). The selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) class of antidepressants are recommended as first-line pharmacotherapy for depression (3), as they are considered to have a favourable side effect profile. The effects of SSRIs are less well established in type 2 diabetes; while SSRIs consistently improve depressive outcomes (4), the evidence that they improve glycaemia and other biomedical outcomes is less consistent. A recent systematic review of observational studies reported that antidepressant use may in fact increase the risk of incident type 2 diabetes (5), although the causal basis of this association has been disputed (6). In randomised controlled trials (RCTs) of patients with type 2 diabetes and depression, some have reported benefits of SSRIs on both depression and glycaemia, whereas others have reported benefit for depression but not glycaemia (7).

A potential reason for the inconsistency in findings is the different types of SSRIs used. RCTs that have tested fluoxetine versus placebo have generally found improvements in glycaemia (8, 9), whereas other SSRIs such as paroxetine have not observed such positive effects (10). No previous meta-analysis has compared different types of SSRI for their effects on glycaemia. Another possible reason is different clinical groups: whilst some studies have tested SSRIs for glycaemia in patients with comorbid depression (7), others have not selected for depression (8, 9). Some studies have recruited non-diabetes patients with elevated insulin resistance (11), whilst others have recruited patients with established diabetes (12). Within the type 2 diabetes population, study samples have

varied from those who are insulin-requiring (13) to those still prescribed only oral diabetes medications (12).

With SSRIs proposed as both a potential cause and a potential therapy for diabetes, a clearer consensus regarding their effects on glycaemia is needed, as well as the metabolic and psychological moderators of such effects. We have therefore conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis of placebo-controlled RCTs, with the primary aim of testing whether SSRIs cause a change in glycaemia over time. Our secondary aims were to compare individual SSRIs for their respective effects on glycaemia, and to test for moderators of response, including comorbidity of depression, comorbidity of diabetes, elevated insulin resistance, treatment duration and weight loss.

Methods

Search strategy and selection criteria

The current systematic review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (14), in which studies that meet review criteria are examined and those that were RCTs and with sufficient data pooled for meta-analysis. The protocol was prospectively registered (PROSPERO ID CRD42018092397) (15).

We systematically searched the following databases from 1 January 1987 (as contemporary SSRIs were first used in this year) to 28 March 2018: EMBASE, PsycINFO, Web of Science, Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials (CENTRAL) and PubMed. Additionally, unpublished trials were searched for in clinical trials databases such as ClinicalTrials.gov and the ISRCTN Register.

The following MeSH search strategy was implemented: “(“Serotonin Uptake Inhibitors/blood”[Mesh] OR “Serotonin Uptake Inhibitors/therapeutic use”[Mesh]) AND (“Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2/drug therapy”[Mesh] OR “Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2/metabolism”[Mesh] OR “Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2/prevention and control”[Mesh] OR “Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2/psychology”[Mesh] OR “Diabetes Mellitus, Type 2/therapy”[Mesh])”. Following this, a free text search was carried out in all databases using Boolean operators and truncation (*): “(ssri* OR “selective serotonin” OR fluoxetine OR citalopram OR escitalopram OR fluvoxamine OR sertraline OR paroxetine) AND (glycaemic OR glycemic OR glycaemia OR glycemia OR glucose OR diabetes OR diabetic OR “insulin resistance” OR “insulin sensitivity” OR “insulin secretion” OR “beta-cell function” OR homa-ir OR homa-b OR “metabolic factors”) NOT (rat* OR mouse OR mice)”. Where filters could be applied appropriately, the search was limited to clinical trials and human studies only.

Titles were reviewed and abstracts of all titles fulfilling the inclusion criteria were assessed. Full-text articles of abstracts meeting the inclusion criteria were examined and relevant studies were analysed for data extraction. The reference lists of included studies were checked for additional publications. Two authors (TT and CDM) independently performed the literature search and evaluated the studies for inclusion. Any disagreements were resolved through discussion with a third author (CWPH) and consensus reached.

The inclusion criteria were: (1) RCTs comparing any SSRIs with placebo, (2) glycaemia was measured, as a primary or a secondary outcome, using HbA1c or fasting blood glucose (FBG), (3) glycaemia was measured before and after the intervention and

placebo, (4) a minimum of 10 patients were recruited. The specific exclusion criteria were: (1) observational studies, (2) case reports or case series, (3) review articles or other secondary analyses not presenting original data, (4) pre-clinical studies performed *in vitro* or in animals, (5) RCTs involving active controls such as other antidepressants.

To maximise comparability of studies and to account most robustly for placebo effects on depression, only placebo-controlled RCTs were included. We included a range of studies examining patients with type 2 diabetes, patients without type 2 diabetes, as well as patients with and without depression, in order to elicit the impact of SSRIs on different subpopulations. However, because potential effects of SSRIs on insulin secretion were evaluated, we additionally excluded studies involving exclusively patients with type 1 diabetes or exclusively insulin-dependent type 2 diabetes, given that their endogenous insulin secretory function has a limited chance of recovery with pharmacotherapy (16).

Data extraction and quality assessment

The primary outcome was change in glycaemia, as measured by FBG or HbA1c. As FBG is more rapidly responsive to change (17), this was used as the primary data of extraction where presented. For each included study, the following additional data were extracted: sample size, mean age and sex of participants, baseline diabetes/metabolic status (including baseline insulin resistance and insulin secretion estimates), duration and dose of intervention and control, baseline BMI and change in weight, significant adverse effects, whether glycaemia was a primary or secondary outcome, and the mean change in FBG for intervention and control groups. If the raw value for mean change in FBG was not presented, this was estimated by subtracting baseline FBG from follow-up FBG. If the SD of the change score was missing, we used the square root of the average of the

baseline and follow-up variance in each group, thereby assuming that the correlation between the baseline and the follow-up outcome values was 0.5. If raw values for insulin resistance and secretion were not available, the Homeostatic Model Assessment (HOMA) formula (18), which uses FBG and fasting plasma insulin, was employed to derive these values. For studies including a subgroup of patients with insulin-dependent diabetes, the authors were contacted for data stratified by insulin use. If no response was received, the whole sample was included in order to extract the maximum available data.

The quality of studies was evaluated using the Cochrane Collaboration's tool for risk of bias (19). Whilst other quality assessment tools are numerical scales, empirical evidence suggests associations between such scales and treatment effect sizes are inconsistent and unpredictable (20). For each type of bias, two authors (TT and CWPH) independently judged the risk as low, high or unclear using the Cochrane Collaboration tool's criteria. Consensus discussion with a third author (CDM) was used to resolve differences.

Statistical analysis

Using the `metan` command in STATA 11.0, we performed meta-analysis for any individual SSRI tested in at least 3 RCTs. For each study, effect-size estimates were calculated using the standardised mean difference (SMD) in change in glycaemia following treatment. SMD is an appropriate measure of effect estimate when studies assess the same variable using different measures, such as FBG and HbA1c. SMD was calculated by dividing the mean difference by the pooled SD of each arm (equivalent to Cohen's *d*). Given that Cohen's *d* may produce a biased estimate of effect size in small studies where $n < 20$, this was converted into Hedges' *g*. The standard error (SE) of each study's group sizes was calculated according to a formula provided by Cooper and

Hedges (21). Next, studies were weighted using an inverse-variance method, studies with larger precision given greater weight. Pooled effect estimates were calculated using a random-effects model, which allows for heterogeneity between studies by permitting the true effects estimated by the studies to differ between studies. The combined effect thus represents the mean of the population of true effects and is appropriate where effects may vary between populations (22). This is expected in this meta-analysis where there is variation in medication, metabolic status, treatment duration and dose.

Forest plots were stratified firstly by type of SSRI, and citalopram and escitalopram were combined because of their similar molecular structure, as in previous meta-analyses (23). In order to define subgroups most likely to respond to treatment, the meta-analysis was repeated when stratified by presence/absence of depression and then presence/absence of diabetes at baseline. Heterogeneity between studies was quantified by calculating the I^2 statistic, which represents the fraction of variation between studies attributable to heterogeneity. Values for I^2 range between 0% and 100% with values of 25%, 50% and 75% suggesting low, moderate and high heterogeneity respectively (24).

Four independent sensitivity analyses were conducted: i) removing studies reporting HbA1c only; ii) removing studies involving any insulin-dependent patients; iii) removing studies reporting depression as a secondary outcome; and iv) removing small studies (recruiting less than 40 patients). Publication bias was assessed using a Funnel plot, Begg's Test and Egger's test (25). In order to define moderators of treatment response, we performed random-effects meta-regression using the following study-level covariates: baseline HOMA-IR (insulin resistance), baseline BMI, depression measured as a primary or secondary outcome (dummy coded 1 for primary, 0 for secondary),

diabetes status (dummy coded 1 for diabetes population, 0 for non-diabetes), treatment duration in weeks, and change in body weight. Baseline HOMA-B is directly proportional to HOMA-IR so was not also tested in meta-regression. Data on change in HOMA measures were only available for 3 studies and therefore were not used.

Results

A total of 2761 potentially relevant studies were identified. After reviewing titles, 105 abstracts were read and 42 full-texts further analysed. From these, 16 studies were included in meta-analysis (Figure 1), of which 8 (8, 9, 12, 26-30), 3 (10, 31, 32), 2 (11, 33), 1 (34), 1 (35) and 1 (36) studies tested fluoxetine, paroxetine, escitalopram, citalopram, sertraline and fluvoxamine respectively. Duration of studies ranged from 4 weeks to 12 months. Across all studies included in the meta-analysis, there were a total of 835 participants, with a mean age of 49.0 years and 47.1% of participants were male. Ten of the studies investigated patients with type 2 diabetes, of which 5 studies had comorbid depression. Only 4 studies measured glycaemia as a primary or co-primary outcome (10, 31, 34, 35). The majority of studies measured glycaemia using FBG and only 3 measured HbA1c (28, 32, 35) (Table 1). Risk of bias was low in most domains, excepting a high risk of attrition bias in 7 studies due to non-specification of intention-to-treat analysis, an unclear risk of selection bias in 10 studies due to lack of detailed explanation of allocation concealment procedures, and an unclear bias arising from pharmaceutical funding for 8 of the studies (Table 2). Aside from an increased incidence of tremor in one study, adverse effects were no more common in SSRI patients than placebo (26) (Table 3).

In the overall meta-analysis, SSRIs led to a significantly greater improvement in glycaemia compared to placebo (*pooled effect size (ES)* = -0.34, 95% CI -0.48 to -0.21; $p < 0.001$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 16$). The overall heterogeneity for the full meta-analysis was very low ($I^2 = 0\%$, $p = 0.63$). Of individual SSRIs, a beneficial effect of SSRIs was observed for fluoxetine ($ES = -0.29$, 95% CI -0.54 to -0.05; $p = 0.018$) and escitalopram/citalopram ($ES = -0.33$, 95% CI -0.59 to -0.07; $p = 0.012$). In contrast, paroxetine displayed a non-significant effect on glycaemia ($ES = -0.19$, 95% CI -0.58 to 0.19; $p = 0.33$). The heterogeneity for all subgroups was low and not significant. There were insufficient studies to perform a subgroup analysis on sertraline and fluvoxamine (Table 3, Figure 2).

In the subgroup of patient with diabetes at baseline, SSRIs significantly improved glycaemia compared to placebo ($ES = -0.40$ (95% CI -0.60, -0.21), $p < 0.001$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 10$). However, in non-diabetes populations, this effect was not significant ($ES = -0.26$ (95% CI -0.52, 0.01), $p = 0.061$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 6$) (Table 3, Figure 3). Similar effects of SSRI were seen in patients with depression ($ES = -0.31$ (95% CI -0.57, -0.06), $p = 0.015$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 5$) and those without depression ($ES = -0.35$ (-0.53, -0.18), $p < 0.001$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 11$) at baseline (Table 3, Figure 4). In random-effects meta-regression using study-level covariates, presence of diabetes ($p = 0.41$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 16$) baseline HOMA-IR ($p = 0.46$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 7$), baseline BMI ($p = 0.30$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 12$), duration of treatment ($p = 0.47$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 16$), measuring depression as a primary or secondary outcome ($p = 0.87$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 16$), and change in weight ($p = 0.93$, $N_{\text{studies}} = 12$) were not significantly associated with glycaemia treatment effect.

In sensitivity analyses, when respectively excluding studies reporting HbA1c; studies including any insulin-dependent patients; studies measuring depressive symptoms as a secondary outcome; or studies with less than 40 patients, the overall result did not significantly differ (Supplementary Table 1, Supplemental Digital Content, <http://links.lww.com/PSYMED/A567>). There was no evidence of publication bias: (Egger's test $p = 0.48$, symmetrical Funnel plot (Figure 5), Begg's test $p = 0.50$).

Discussion

In this systematic review and meta-analysis of 16 RCTs, SSRIs had a positive overall effect on glycaemia compared to placebo. Of individual SSRIs, significant benefit was seen for fluoxetine and escitalopram/citalopram but not for paroxetine. The comorbidity of depression did not moderate the effects of SSRIs on glycaemia. SSRIs were generally well tolerated. Across studies, diabetes status, baseline insulin resistance, baseline BMI and change in weight were not associated with reduction in glycaemia in the treatment group, although between-study heterogeneity was very low.

Comparison with previous literature

Two previous systematic reviews have tested the effects of SSRIs on glycaemia. Although well conducted, both were significantly limited by their scope, including only 5 studies each in their meta-analyses of SSRIs and glycaemia. The first included only fluoxetine studies (37), thereby excluding the majority of SSRIs, including those potentially more effective in treating depression (38). The second review was limited to patients with diagnosed depression and comorbid diagnosed diabetes (39), thereby excluding high-risk populations such as patients with obesity, who may also benefit from effects of SSRIs on glycaemia. By including 16 studies, our meta-analysis exhibits

increased power for testing the effects of SSRIs on glycaemia. Moreover, this is the first meta-analysis to compare the different SSRIs and include studies investigating patients without diabetes, or without depression, in order to assess generalisability.

Our findings contrast those of a systematic review of 22 observational studies of antidepressants and diabetes, which concluded, of antidepressants, “caution is advised and a heightened alertness to the potential risk of diabetes is necessary” (40). However, the authors stressed that causality was not established and pointed out large inconsistencies across studies. Likewise, secondary analyses of the Diabetes Prevention Program have reported an association between antidepressant use and increased risk of incident type 2 diabetes (41). However, those receiving antidepressants at baseline had significantly higher CRP concentration (42), itself a robust risk factor for type 2 diabetes onset (43). This suggests that antidepressants are being given to people who are already at high risk of type 2 diabetes for other reasons. Whilst medical records studies have found evidence of weight gain following long-term use of some antidepressants (4), results of clinical trials have been conflicting and have consistently found weight-loss following fluoxetine treatment, at least in the short-term (45). Meanwhile, negative basic science experiments have generally used vastly supra-physiological concentrations of SSRIs, such that toxic effects on beta-cells are unsurprising. Thus, there have been reports that SSRIs such as fluoxetine impair β -cell metabolic coupling and/or insulin secretion in vitro (46, 47), but fluoxetine concentrations up to 100 μ M were used in these studies, considerably higher than the fluoxetine steady state concentration in plasma of 0.3-2.6 μ M (48). By contrast, basic science research using physiological concentrations of SSRIs has indicated that fluoxetine has direct peripheral effects stimulatory effects on

mouse and human islets in vitro to increase insulin secretion and improve β -cell mass (49).

Interpretation

Our findings suggest that short-term use of SSRIs is metabolically safe and may even improve glycaemic control. With 8 included studies, results for fluoxetine are the most rigorous. Out of the other SSRIs, only escitalopram/citalopram had a positive overall effect, although this is cautioned by a lower number of studies. Though likewise limited in power to detect a significant effect, the raw effect size (-0.19) for paroxetine was notably less promising, although the inclusion of some insulin-dependent patients in 2 of the 3 studies may have blunted this effect (10, 31). However, given that glycaemia was generally a secondary outcome of included studies, future trials are needed that are powered specifically for this measure and thereby confirm our findings. The relative paucity of data for non-fluoxetine SSRIs emphasises the need for trials of these agents for glycaemia. In particular, sertraline is commonly used for depression and positive effects on glycaemia have been reported by other clinical trials and some basic science research (50, 51).

Although benefits on glycaemia were not significant in patients without established diabetes in our analysis, such effects were limited by a lower number of studies for non-diabetes samples, which were also generally of shorter duration. Furthermore, their better glycaemia at baseline may have led to a floor effect in treatment response. Therefore, there is a need for 6-12-month trials of SSRIs targeted at patients at a high risk of diabetes.

Of the possible mechanisms by which SSRIs could improve glycaemia, weight loss – itself a consistent finding in our analysis – did not correlate with improvement in glycaemia across studies. An alternative explanation is that improved glycaemia resulted from increased insulin secretion following SSRI treatment. In this case, greater benefit may be achieved by targeting patients with established diabetes: unlike patients with pre-diabetes, whose insulin secretion is largely preserved, patients with established diabetes exhibit markedly reduced insulin secretion (52), whose improvement is the target of medications such as sulphonylureas. Our results suggest that SSRIs could have a similar role in augmenting insulin secretion in patients with non-insulin-dependent diabetes. This requires further research by future studies using repeated measures of insulin function in tandem with measures of glycaemia. Although findings did not vary significantly whether patients were selected for depression or not, there were fewer studies recruiting patients with depression in our synthesis. Therefore, it remains conceivable that some effects could occur through improvement in depression leading to improved self-care, treatment adherence and physical activity. Further studies targeting patients with depression are needed to test this model.

Strengths and limitations

Our review is strengthened by its systematic literature search, combined data collection on glycaemia measures and biological correlates, and the use of random-effects meta-analysis to account for heterogeneity. Including 16 studies enabled us for the first time to compare different SSRIs, to test effects on different populations and to conduct meta-regression analysis. Sensitivity analyses did not alter our findings. In selecting a far broader range of studies than previous meta-analyses, there is a risk that true treatment effects become harder to detect. However, our findings produced low overall

heterogeneity, which limited the ability of our meta-regression analyses to detect potential covariates of varying response, such as insulin resistance and weight loss. It should be stressed that the I^2 value is an estimate of heterogeneity that can be imprecise, particularly in smaller meta-analyses (53). Thus our calculated I^2 of 0% heterogeneity does not mean there is no heterogeneity between studies. The use of averages of patient characteristics instead of individual patient data for meta-regression may have resulted in ecological fallacy and further limited power to detect relationships (54). We accepted small trials in our inclusion criteria, although exclusion of these studies did not affect the overall result. Across studies, glycaemia was generally a secondary outcome, such that trials were not specifically powered to detect a significant change in glycaemia. Finally, the majority of studies were judged as having an unclear risk of bias in at least one domain, mostly due to lack of explicit intention-to-treat analysis and lack of detail on allocation concealment procedures.

Conclusion

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, in particular fluoxetine and escitalopram/citalopram, have a positive overall effect on glycaemia, which is incompletely explained by effects on depression or weight loss across studies. Powered clinical trials of fluoxetine and other SSRIs of longer duration are now needed to confirm these findings, whilst also studying the underlying mechanisms.

Author Contributions

All authors designed the research. TT, CDM and DS performed the statistical analyses. TT, CWPH and CDM performed the literature searches and risk of bias assessments. TT wrote the first draft. CDM, PMJ, SJP, KI, DS and CWPH revised the manuscript for important intellectual content. CDM had primary responsibility for the final content.

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Declaration of interests

KI reports speaker fees from Eli Lilly, Janssen, Novo Nordisk and Sanofi.

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ACCEPTED

FIGURE LEGENDS

Figure 1

PRISMA flow diagram summarising the literature search and study selection

Figure 2

Forest plot showing random effects meta-analysis of change in glycaemia for selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors versus placebo: stratified by medication type

Figure 3

Forest plot showing random effects meta-analysis of change in glycaemia for selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors versus placebo: stratified by diabetes status at baseline

Figure 4

Forest plot showing random effects meta-analysis of change in glycaemia for selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors versus placebo: stratified by depression status at baseline

Figure 5

Funnel plot to test publication bias. 'g' represents Hedge's *g*; this was used for effect size estimates.

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

Figure 5

Table 1 <i>Summary characteristics of studies included in quantitative synthesis</i>										
Citation, Country of setting	Study design	Total sample size (male), mean age	Intervention (<i>n</i>), dose and duration	Control (<i>n</i>) and duration	Psychological inclusion criteria	Baseline diabetes status; other metabolic status	Mean baselin e BMI (kg/m ²)	HOMA -IR baseline	HOMA -B baseline (%)	Was glycaemic control a primary or secondary outcome?
Citalopram or escitalopram										
Kamarck et al. (2011), US	Double- blind, placebo-	159 (79), N/R	Citalopram (<i>n</i> = 81), 40mg/d for 2	Placebo (<i>n</i> = 78) for 2 months	High hostility (anger) scores on	No selection	29.53 (5.64)	3.64 (3.67)	172.75 (N/R)	Primary outcome

	controlled RCT		months		questionnaires					
Vander Wal, Gang, Griffing and Gadde (2012), US	Double-blind, placebo-controlled RCT	40 (19), 45.00 (13.02)	Escitalopram ($n = 20$), 20mg/d for 12 weeks	Placebo ($n = 20$) for 12 weeks	Night Eating Syndrome (NES), ≥ 25 on NES-questionnaire	No selection	32.95 (6.92)	N/R	N/R	Secondary outcome
Glintborg et al. (2018), Denmark	Double-blind, placebo-controlled RCT	39 (0), 31.00 (6.00)	Escitalopram ($n = 20$), 20mg/d for 12 weeks	Placebo ($n = 19$) for 12 weeks	None	No selection; but selected for overweight premenopausal women with Polycystic Ovary	35.80 (6.50)	4.80 (2.40)	229.00 (126.00)	Secondary outcome

						Syndrome				
Fluoxetine										
Breum, Bjerre, Bak, Jacobsen and Astrup (1995), Denmark	Double-blind, placebo-controlled RCT	40 (12), 43.95 (9.27)	Fluoxetine ($n = 20$), 60mg/d for 12 months	Placebo ($n = 20$) for 12 months	None	T2DM or Impaired glucose tolerance (WHO criteria 1985); obesity	38.20 (4.60)	8.98 (N/R)	103.64 (N/R)	Secondary outcome
Connolly et al. (1995), UK	Double-blind, placebo-controlled	24 (15), 65.91 (N/R)	Fluoxetine ($n = 11$), 60mg/d for 6 months	Placebo ($n = 13$) for 6 months	None	Diet-controlled T2DM (HbA1c	31.73 (N/R)	N/R	N/R	Secondary outcome

	d RCT					<14%)				
Daubresse et al. (1996), Belgium	Double- blind, placebo- controlle d RCT	82 (N/R), 52 (10.42)	Fluoxetine (<i>n</i> = 39), 60mg/d for 8 weeks	Placebo (<i>n</i> = 43) for 8 weeks	None	T2DM; obesity	34.24 (4.85)	9.72 (N/R)	68.12 (N/R)	Secondar y outcome
Kutnowski et al. (1992), Belgium ^a	Double- blind, placebo- controlle d RCT	50 (N/R), 50.52 (10.76)	Fluoxetine (<i>n</i> = 25), 60mg/d for 8 weeks	Placebo (<i>n</i> = 25) for 8 weeks	None	Impaired glucose tolerance (Oral glucose tolerance test, 120 min blood glucose > 6.7mmol/L)	34.35 (4.60)	N/R	N/R	Secondar y outcome

Lustman, Freedland, Griffith and Clouse (2000), US	Double- blind, placebo- controlled RCT	54 (16), 46.35 (12.25)	Fluoxetine (<i>n</i> = 27), 40 mg/d for 8 weeks	Placebo (<i>n</i> = 27) for 8 weeks	Major depressive disorder, ≥ 14 on BDI or HAM-D	T2DM and minority T1DM	N/R	N/R	N/R	Secondary outcome
Maheux, Ducros, Bourque, Garon and Chiasson (1997), Canada	Double- blind, placebo- controlled RCT	12 (8), 54.5 (11.09)	Fluoxetine (<i>n</i> = 6), 60mg/d for 4 weeks	Placebo (<i>n</i> = 6) for 4 weeks	None	T2DM; obesity	33.20 (6.52)	15.65 (N/R)	94.23 (N/R)	Secondary outcome

O’Kane, Wiles and Wales (1994), UK	Double-blind, placebo-controlled RCT	19 (6), 57.13 (N/R)	Fluoxetine ($n = 9$), 60mg/d for 12 months	Placebo ($n = 10$) for 12 months	None	T2DM; obesity	36.27 (N/R)	N/R	N/R	Secondary outcome
Visser, Seidell, Koppeschaar and Smits (1993), Netherlands	Double-blind, placebo-controlled RCT	38 (38), 40.6 (6.79)	Fluoxetine ($n = 18$), 60mg/d for 12 weeks	Placebo ($n = 20$) for 12 weeks	None	No selection for diabetes; but selected for obesity and high abdominal fat distribution	27.9 (1.17)	2.17 (N/R)	89.26 (N/R)	Secondary outcome
Fluvoxamine										
Lu, Chen,	Double-	85 (61),	50mg/d	Placebo with	None; but	No selection	N/R	2.14	84.98	Secondary

Kuo, Hsu and Chen (2017), Taiwan	blind, placebo-controlled RCT	44.88 (8.98)	Fluvoxamine with 100mg/d clozapine ($n = 43$) for 12 weeks (combination therapy)	300 mg/d clozapine ($n = 42$) for 12 weeks (monotherapy)	selected for schizophrenia (DSM-IV)			(1.98)	(N/R)	Primary outcome
Paroxetine										
Paile-Hyvärinen, Wahlbeck and Eriksson	Single-blind, placebo-controlled RCT	13 (0), 61.65 (10.04)	Paroxetine ($n = 7$), 20mg/d for 10 weeks	Placebo ($n = 6$) for 10 weeks	Mild depression (MADRS 2.5-12)	T2DM (HbA1c < 6.5%)	30.91 (4.81)	N/R	N/R	Primary outcome

(2003), Finland										
Paile- Hyvärinen, Wahlbeck and Eriksson (2007), Finland	Double- blind, placebo- controlle d RCT	43 (33), 59.34 (5.69)	Paroxetine (<i>n</i> = 20), 20mg/d for 6 months	Placebo (<i>n</i> = 23) for 6 months	Mild depression (no more than 6 symptoms, DSM-IV)	T2DM (HbA1c > 7.0%)	31.84 (5.41)	N/R	N/R	Primary outcome
Xue (2004), China ^b	Double- blind, placebo- controlle d RCT	48 (20), Could not be acquire d	Paroxetine (<i>n</i> = 24), 40mg/d for 8 weeks	Placebo (<i>n</i> = 24) for 8 weeks	Major depressive disorder	T2DM and minority T1DM	N/R	N/R	N/R	Secondar y outcome

Sertraline										
Echeverry, Duran, Bonds, Lee and Davidson (2009), US	Double-blind, placebo-controlled RCT	89 (24), 52.5 (9.00)	Sertraline ($n = 45$), 50mg/d to 100mg/d for 6 months	Placebo ($n = 44$) for 6 months	Major depressive disorder	T2DM and minority T1DM	N/R	N/R	N/R	Primary outcome
<p><i>Notes:</i> Data is presented as mean, with the standard deviation in parenthesis, unless indicated otherwise. Abbreviations: BDI, Beck's Depression Inventory; DSM-IV, Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (4th edition); HAM-D, Hamilton Rating Scale for Depression; MADRS, Montgomery-Asberg's Depression Rating Scale; N/R, not reported; N/S, not significant. a) Glucose-intolerant subset of study analysed only, due to potential overlap between the diabetes subset in the study by Daubresse et al. (1996). b) The study by Xue (2004) was published in Chinese; as translation could not be acquired, data extraction was limited.</p>										

Table 2

Risk of Bias in included studies, evaluated by the Cochrane Collaboration tool

First author, Year, Country,	Random sequence generation (selection bias)	Allocation concealment (selection bias)	Blinding of participants and researchers (performance bias)	Blinding of outcome assessment (detection bias)	Incomplete outcome data (attrition bias)	Selective reporting bias (reporting bias)	Other bias	Summary assessment of risk of bias for the whole study
Citalopram or escitalopram								
Kamarck, 2011, US	Low risk Randomised	Low risk Central	Low risk Blinding of	Low risk Blinding of	Low risk ITT analysis;	Low risk All	Unclear risk Participation	Low risk

	allocation	pharmacy-	participants	outcome	all drop-outs	predetermine	bias due to a	
	using a	controlled	and key	assessment	were reported	d outcomes	potential	
	omputer	allocation,	study	ensured, and	and reasons	were reported	difference	
	generated	with	personnel	unlikely that	were stated		between	
	randomisation	concealmen		blinding			volunteers and	
	list	t of		could have			those who did	
		allocation		been broken			not return the	
		in a					postcard	
		confidential						
		envelope						
Vander	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Low risk
Wal, 2012,	Randomised	Central	Blinding of	Blinding of	ITT analysis;	All	Participants were	
US	allocation	pharmacy-	participants	outcome	no patients	predetermine	recruited from	
	using	controlled	and key	assessment	dropped out	d outcomes	those responding	

	computer-generated block randomisation	allocation	study personnel	ensured, and unlikely that blinding could have been broken	from the study	were reported to advertisements-participation bias		
Glintborg, 2018, Denmark	Unclear risk Randomisation reported but method not described	Low risk Central pharmacy-controlled allocation	Low risk Blinding of participants and key study personnel	Low risk Blinding of outcome assessment ensured, and unlikely that blinding could have been broken	High risk Although reasons for drop-outs were defined, ITT was not conducted	Low risk All predetermine d outcomes were reported	Unclear risk Funded by Lundbeck and Novo Nordisk pharmaceutical companies	Unclear risk Involvement of pharmaceutical companies and lack of ITT analysis may influence results

Fluoxetine								
Breum,	Unclear risk	Unclear risk	Low risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Unclear risk
1995,	Randomisation	Unknown	Blinding of	Blinding of	Unknown if	All	Funded by Eli	Involvement
Denmark	reported but method not described	Unknown	participants and key study personnel	outcome assessment ensured, and unlikely that blinding could have been broken	ITT analysis was performed, but did report drop-outs and reasons	predetermine d outcomes were reported	Lilly and Co (pharmaceutical company)	of pharmaceutica l companies and lack of ITT analysis may influence results
Connolly,	Unclear risk	Unclear risk	Low risk	Low risk	High risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Unclear risk
1995, UK	Randomisation	Unknown	Double-blind	Double-blind	Although the reasons for	All predetermine	Funded by Lilly industries	Involvement of

method not
described

drop-outs were defined, they were excluded from analysis

d outcomes (pharmaceutical company) were reported

pharmaceutical companies and lack of ITT analysis may influence results

Daubresse, 1996, Belgium	Unclear risk	Unclear risk	Low risk	Low risk	High risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Unclear risk
	Randomisation reported but method not described	Unknown	Blinding of participants and key personnel	Blinding of outcome assessment ensured, and unlikely that blinding could have	Asymmetry in the reasons for drop-outs and intention to treat-analysis not performed.	All predetermine d outcomes were reported	Unclear how the participants were recruited	

been broken

Kutnowski, 1992, Belgium	Low risk 'Randomisation was balanced by blocks of 4'	Unclear risk Unknown	Low risk Double-blind	Low risk Double-blind	Low risk ITT analysis; all drop-outs and reasons were stated	Low risk All predetermined outcomes were reported	Unclear risk Eli Lilly Benelux provided the drugs and monitored with assistance	Unclear risk Involvement of pharmaceutical company may positively influence the results with fluoxetine
Lustman, 2000, USA	Low risk Randomised allocation using computer	Unclear risk Unknown	Low risk Blinding of participants and key	Low risk Blinding of outcome assessment	Low risk Although ITT analyses was not	Low risk All predetermined outcomes	Unclear risk Eli Lilly Indiana funded this study	Low risk Involvement of pharmaceutical

generated study ensured, and implemented, were reported
 randomisation personnel unlikely that no significant
 blinding differences
 could have been broken completers
 and non completers of
 study; all
 drop-outs and
 reasons were
 defined

Maheux,	Unclear risk	Unclear risk	Low risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Unclear risk
1997,	Randomisation	Blinding of	Blinding of	Unclear	All	Eli Lilly Canada	Involvement	
Canada	occurred but	Unknown	participants	outcome	whether ITT	predetermine	funded this study	of
	method not		and key	assessment	analysis was	d outcomes		pharmaceutica

described study ensured, and implemented, were reported
 personnel unlikely that or whether
 blinding there were any
 could have drop-
 been broken outs/exclusion
 s from
 analysis
 l companies,
 lack of ITT
 analysis and
 lack of
 defining drop-
 outs may
 influence
 results

O’Kane, 1994, UK	Unclear risk Randomisation occurred but method not described	Unclear risk Unknown	Low risk Double-blind	Low risk Double-blind	High risk Three participants dropped out, however ITT analysis was	Low risk All predetermine d outcomes were reported	Unclear risk Lilly industries funded this study.	Unclear risk Involvement of pharmaceutica l companies and lack of
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					not implemented.			ITT analysis may influence results
					Reasons for drop-outs were specified.			
Visser, 1993, Netherlands	Unclear risk Randomisation occurred but method not described	Unclear risk Unknown	Low risk Double-blind	Low risk Double-blind	High risk Two participants dropped out, reasons were stated but ITT analysis was not implemented	Unclear risk Did not report adverse effects, although this was a pre-specified outcome	Unclear risk One of the authors was from Eli Lilly Netherlands.	Unclear risk Involvement of pharmaceutical companies and lack of ITT analysis may influence results

Fluvoxamine

	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk
Lu, 2017, Taiwan	Randomised allocation using computer generated stratified block randomisation	Central computer-generated allocation of treatment, with treatment delivered in coded containers.	Blinding of participants and key study personnel	Blinding of outcome assessment ensured, and unlikely that blinding could have been broken	ITT analysis; all drop-outs and reasons were stated	All predetermine d outcomes were reported		

Paroxetine

Paile-	Low risk	Unclear risk	Low risk	High risk	High risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Unclear risk
Hyvärinen, 2003, Finland	Randomised allocation using computer generated randomisation	Allocation reported to have been concealed, but the method of concealment was not adequately described	Blinding of participants and clinicians, but not investigators .	Investigators were not blinded- so may have introduced detection bias	No ITT analysis, as 2 drop-outs not included in analysis; although reasons were defined	All predetermined outcomes were reported	Did not state exactly how the researchers recruited participants; possible participation bias	
Paile-	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	High risk	Low risk	Unclear risk	Unclear risk
Hyvärinen, 2007,	Randomised allocation	Central pharmacy-	Blinding of participants	Blinding of outcome	ITT analysis not	All predetermined	GlaxoSmithKlin e funded the	Involvement of

Finland	using computer generated randomisation	controlled allocation	and key study personnel	assessment ensured, and unlikely that blinding could have been broken	implemented as only those who completed study were analysed; although reasons for drop-out were defined	d outcomes were reported competing interest	study and provided the drugs;	pharmaceutica l companies and lack of ITT analysis may influence results
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Sertraline

Echeverry,	Low risk	Unclear	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk	Low risk
2009, USA	Randomised allocation	risk Allocation	Blinding of participants	Blinding of outcome	ITT analysis and reasons	All predetermine		

using computer	reported to	and key	assessment	for drop-outs	d outcomes
generated	have been	study	ensured, and	were defined	were reported
randomisation	concealed,	personnel	unlikely that		
	but the		blinding		
	method of		could have		
	concealment		been broken		
	it was not				
	adequately				
	described				

Notes: The risk of bias for each domain, with reasons, has been presented in this table. If the summary risk of bias was unclear, a justification was given. Abbreviations: ITT, Intention To Treat.

Table 3

Changes in glycaemia, weight, and adverse effects, following treatment with Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors compared to control groups

Study author, year and country	Intervention vs. control group	Change in glycaemia for intervention group (SD)	Change in glycaemia for placebo group (SD)	<i>P</i> -value for comparing change in glycaemia between intervention and placebo groups	Measure of glycaemi c control	Change in weight in SSRI group (kg)	Adverse effects ^a
Citalopram or escitalopram							
Kamarck, 2011, US	Citalopram vs Placebo	-0.13 (N/R) mmol/L	+0.08 (N/R) mmol/L	$p = 0.020$	FBG	-0.26	N/S
Vander Wal, 2012, US	Escitalopram vs Placebo	+0.22 (0.35) mmol/L	+0.42 (0.26) mmol/L	$p = 0.577$	FBG	-0.43	N/S

Glintborg, 2018, Denmark	Escitalopram vs Placebo	0.00 (0.70) mmol/L	0.00 (0.60) mmol/L	$p = \text{N/S}$	FBG	N/R	N/S
Fluoxetine studies							
Breum, 1995, Denmark	Fluoxetine vs Placebo	-2.10 (3.60) mmol/L	-0.80 (1.20) mmol/L	$p = \text{N/R}$	FBG	-10.1	N/S
Connolly, 1995, UK	Fluoxetine vs Placebo	-0.80 (3.48) mmol/L	+1.20 (1.63) mmol/L	$p = \text{N/S}$	FBG	-3.9	N/S
Daubresse, 1996, Belgium	Fluoxetine vs Placebo	-1.70 (2.83) mmol/L	-0.02 (2.97) mmol/L	$p < 0.001$	FBG	-3.1	Significantly more patients experienced tremor in

							fluoxetine group
Kutnowski, 1992, Belgium ^b	Fluoxetine vs Placebo	-0.12 (0.55) mmol/L	-0.03 (0.59) mmol/L	$p = \text{N/S}$	FBG	N/R	N/R for subgroup analysed
Lustman, 2000, USA	Fluoxetine vs Placebo	-0.40 (1.65) %	- 0.07 (1.65) %	$p = 0.130$	HbA1c	+6.09	N/S
Maheux, 1997, Canada	Fluoxetine vs Placebo	-1.10 (2.79) mmol/L	-0.40 (3.92) mmol/L	$p = \text{N/S}$	FBG	-0.5	N/S
O'Kane, 1994, UK	Fluoxetine vs Placebo	-0.30 (1.78) mmol/L	-0.50 (1.78) mmol/L	$p = \text{N/S}$	FBG	N/R	N/S
Visser, 1993,	Fluoxetine vs	-0.02 (0.19)	-0.12 (0.27)	$p = \text{N/S}$	FBG	-5.9	N/R

Netherlands	Placebo	mmol/L	mmol/L				
Fluvoxamine studies							
Lu, 2017, Taiwan	Fluvoxamine and clozapine vs Placebo and clozapine	-0.02 (0.73) mmol/L	+0.50 (1.11) mmol/L	$p < 0.001$	FBG	+0.7	N/S
Paroxetine studies							
Paile-Hyvärinen, 2003, Finland	Paroxetine vs Placebo	-1.47 (2.52) mmol/L	-0.78 (0.58) mmol/L	$p = 0.720$	FBG	-0.71	N/R
Paile-Hyvärinen, 2007, Finland	Paroxetine vs Placebo	-0.20 (3.56) mmol/L	+0.10 (3.65) mmol/L	$p = \text{N/R}$	FBG	-0.5	N/R

Xue, 2004, China	Paroxetine vs Placebo	-0.50 (1.49) %	-0.10 (1.60) %	$p = \text{N/S}$	HbA1c	N/R	N/R
Sertraline studies							
Echeverry, 2009, USA	Sertraline vs Placebo	-2.00 (2.10) %	-0.90 (2.00) %	$p = 0.003$	HbA1c	-0.045	N/R
<p><i>Notes:</i> Data are presented as mean, with the standard deviation in parenthesis, unless indicated otherwise. Abbreviations: FBG; Fasting blood glucose; HbA1c, glycosylated haemoglobin; N/R, not reported; N/S, not significant; SD, standard deviation; vs., versus. a) Adverse effects only reported when there was a significantly greater incidence in the intervention group compared to control group. b) Glucose-intolerant subset of study analysed only due to potential overlap between the diabetes subset in the study by Daubresse et al. (1996).</p>							