

Duloxetine may help elderly with depression and cognitive impairment

August 29 2024



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Karolinska Institutet has discovered that an already registered antidepressant, duloxetine, may also have positive effects on memory and cognitive functions in the elderly.

[A new study published](#) in the journal *ACS Omega* shows that duloxetine, in addition to treating [depression](#), also inhibits an enzyme involved in the regulation of the nervous system that affects memory and cognition. This could potentially prevent the development of dementia diseases, especially Alzheimer's disease.

"Both depression and cognitive impairment often occur simultaneously in elderly individuals, particularly those in the early stages of a dementia disease," says Taher Darreh-Shori, Docent and Senior Researcher at the Department of Neurobiology, Care Sciences and Society. "The discovery that [duloxetine](#) can have a dual effect is very promising."

"This has been an unexpected discovery alongside our main research," says Taher Darreh-Shori. "We hope to conduct a [clinical study](#) on patients in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease."

The results are important because there are currently no drugs that cure dementia diseases. The fact that an already registered drug can help both with depression and [cognitive impairment](#) can be appreciated by both the medical community and elderly associations.

More information: Taher Darreh-Shori et al, Repurposing Duloxetine as a Potent Butyrylcholinesterase Inhibitor: Potential Cholinergic Enhancing Benefits for Elderly Individuals with Depression and Cognitive Impairment, *ACS Omega* (2024). [DOI: 10.1021/acsomega.4c05089](#)

Provided by Karolinska Institutet

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