

REVERSIBLE BLURRED VISION FOLLOWING SERTRALINE USE DESPITE NORMAL OPHTHALMOLOGIC EXAMINATION: A CASE REPORT

Özgü Şişman¹, Erdem Kettaş²

¹Department of Psychiatry, Bursa Yüksek İhtisas Training and Research Hospital, Bursa, Türkiye; Department of Psychiatry, University of Health Sciences Erenköy Mental Health and Neurological Diseases Training and Research Hospital, Istanbul, Türkiye

²Department of Psychiatry, Bursa Yüksek İhtisas Training and Research Hospital, Bursa, Türkiye; Department of Psychiatry, Sancaktepe Sehit Prof. Dr İlhan Varank Training and Research Hospital, Istanbul, Türkiye

OBJECTIVE: Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are widely prescribed for anxiety disorders and are generally regarded as safe. However, rare ocular adverse effects, including blurred vision, have been reported. This case aims to describe a reversible visual disturbance associated with sertraline use in the absence of identifiable ophthalmologic pathology and to emphasize the importance of clinical awareness of such adverse effects.

CASE: (The patient consent must be provided and specified with appropriate terms). A 51-year-old menopausal woman with no prior psychiatric history presented with anxiety symptoms, including excessive worry, dyspnea, and hand tremor. Initial treatment with fluoxetine at an adequate dose and duration resulted in no significant clinical improvement, prompting a switch to sertraline. Shortly after sertraline initiation, the patient developed bilateral blurred vision, which she described as viewing objects through a rain-covered car windshield. The symptom occurred frequently throughout the day and had not been previously experienced. Comprehensive ophthalmologic examination and diagnostic investigations revealed no pathological

findings. Despite continued treatment, visual symptoms persisted for over two months. Sertraline was subsequently discontinued, and vortioxetine was initiated. Following discontinuation of sertraline, the blurred vision resolved rapidly, with complete symptom remission. After symptom resolution, written informed consent for the scientific use and publication of anonymized clinical data was obtained from the patient.

DISCUSSION: Although ocular adverse effects related to SSRIs are considered uncommon, blurred vision may occur even in the absence of structural ocular abnormalities. While most SSRI-related visual disturbances are reported during the early phase of treatment, persistent presentations may also be observed. This case highlights a probable drug-related, reversible functional visual disturbance associated with sertraline and underscores the need for careful monitoring of visual symptoms during SSRI treatment, even when ophthalmologic evaluations are normal.

Keywords: Sertraline, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, blurred vision, ocular adverse effects, drug-induced visual disturbance