

Inexpensive SSRI antidepressant fluvoxamine could reduce severe COVID

A cheap, generically available anti-depressant may reduce the risk of severe [Covid-19 disease](#) by close to a third in people at high risk, researchers reported [October 27].

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The drug, sold under the brand name Luvox, is a selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SSRI) most often used to treat obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and depression.

But it can affect inflammation, said Dr. Angela Reiersen, an associate professor of psychiatry at Washington University in St. Louis who worked on the study, published in [The Lancet Global Health](#).

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Reiersen and colleagues gave 741 volunteers with Covid-19 100 mg of fluvoxamine twice a day for 10 days while 756 volunteers got a placebo.

Among the patients who got fluvoxamine, 79 — or about 11% — needed treatment in an ER or hospital room compared to nearly 16% of those given placebos. It was a 5% decrease in absolute risk and a 32% decrease in relative risk.

More study is needed to see if the drug might be added to the treatments given to coronavirus patients, but it's cheap. "A 10-day course of fluvoxamine costs approximately \$4 even in well-resourced settings," the researchers wrote.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.**](#)