

Sertraline vs escitalopram: comparison

Companion to the guide · universum.earth · Dr. Pereligyn

What the comparison of 522 trials showed

Measure	Sertraline (Zoloft)	Escitalopram (Cipralex)
Efficacy in head-to-head studies	Not in the more effective group	In the more effective group
Acceptability	Best group	Best group
Differences between drugs	Small, with a wide spread	Small, with a wide spread

Doses and titration

Measure	Sertraline (Zoloft)	Escitalopram (Cipralex)
Usual start	50 mg/day (often 25 mg in anxiety)	10 mg/day (5 mg in older or anxious patients)
Working range	50–200 mg/day	10–20 mg/day
Effect judged	After 4–6 weeks	After 4–6 weeks
Headroom for increases	Large	Small, capped by cardiac safety

Side effects

Measure	Sertraline (Zoloft)	Escitalopram (Cipralex)
Gut	More often, diarrhoea in particular	Less often
Nausea	More frequent in maintenance	Moderate
Drowsiness / insomnia	Either possible	Drowsiness slightly more often
Sexual dysfunction	Common	Common
Effect on QT interval	Not detected	Dose-dependent

Both are prescription-only. This table does not replace a prescription: the choice, dose and tapering schedule are decided by a physician.