

# Letter to Editor: Efficacy of Lofexidine in the Outpatient Management of Tramadol Withdrawal Syndrome



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**T**ramadol is recognized as an opioid with non-opiate properties. It has a low affinity for opioid receptors and prevents reabsorption of norepinephrine and serotonin at synapses. It also increases the level of Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid (GABA) in the central nervous system [1, 2]. Tramadol is an analgesic for patients suffering from moderate to severe pain [1]. In addition, previous studies have shown that tramadol abuse and suicidal attempts have increased in Iran [3, 4]. Tramadol is a highly toxic opioid, causing severe side effects, such as withdrawal syndrome, respiratory distress, rhabdomyolysis, acute renal failure, seizures, and death [5]. In recent years, tramadol withdrawal syndrome and its treatment have become an important issue in the healthcare system [6]. Symptoms of tramadol-induced withdrawal syndrome are restless legs syndrome, insomnia, irritability, diarrhea, insomnia, abdominal spasm, headaches of migraine type, dysfunction of the autonomic system, and myoclonus in extremities [7, 8]. Also, psychosis with its signs and symptoms, such as paranoia, illusions, and delusions are the atypical discomforts in the tramadol withdrawal syndrome [9]. Alpha-2 adrenergic agonists are valuable for the management of withdrawal syndrome due to opioids by reducing the noradrenergic effects in the brain and all symptoms of withdrawal syndrome, such as anxiety, irritability, and restlessness in opioid-dependent patients [6]. Most of these agonists (clonidine and lofexidine,

etc.) are considered to be effective for opioid withdrawal syndrome. Lofexidine is an alpha-2 adrenergic agonist that is structurally similar to clonidine, and in comparison with clonidine, Lofexidine has low side effects, such as bradycardia and hypotension [10, 11]. Accordingly, lofexidine seems to be effective for tramadol withdrawal syndrome. Therefore, further studies are needed in the future.

## Ethical Considerations

### Compliance with ethical guidelines

All ethical principles are considered in this article.

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### Author's contributions

All authors contributed to preparing this article.

### Conflict of interest

The authors declared no conflict of interest.

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