Pharmacotherapy for Obesity

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Obesity is an important risk factor for metabolic disease and various cancers. Treatments of obesity include lifestyle intervention, pharmacotherapy, and bariatric surgery. If weight loss with lifestyle intervention is only modest, pharmacotherapy might be needed. Pharmacotherapy agents can be grouped by treatment period as short term or long term use agent. Several sympathomimetic drugs such as benzphetamine, diethylpropion, phendimetrazine and phentermine, are approved for short term treatment due to their safety issues. For long term treatment, orlistat, lorcaserin, and combination of phentermine/topiramate are approved by U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Orlistat partially blocks intestinal digestion of fat, therefore producing weight loss. Lorcaserin is a serotonin 2C receptor agonist. The combination of phentermine/topiramate produces a mean weight loss of 8-10 kg. Side effects of each drug are quite different. For obesity patient, side effects are important factor when choosing drugs. The goal of this article is to review currently available anti-obesity drugs.

Key Words: Anti-obesity agents; Lorcaserin, Obesity, Phentermine, Topiramte