

Antifungal and antidepressant drugs may help protect against COVID-19

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New research published in the *British Journal of Pharmacology* indicates that two currently available medications—an antifungal drug and an antidepressant—can effectively inhibit the virus that causes COVID-19 in laboratory cells.

Investigators found that the antifungal itraconazole and the antidepressant fluoxetine each blocked the production of infectious SARS-CoV-2 virus in cell culture lab tests. When either drug was used in combination with the antiviral drug remdesivir, the combination showed synergistic effects and inhibited the production of SARS-CoV-2 by more than 90%.

"Preventive vaccination and therapeutic medicines against COVID-19 are both required to effectively combat pandemics caused by emerging zoonotic viruses such as SARS-CoV-2," said senior author Ursula Rescher, Ph.D., of the University of Muenster, in Germany.

More information: Sebastian Schloer et al, Drug synergy of combinatory treatment with remdesivir and the repurposed drugs fluoxetine and itraconazole effectively impairs SARS-CoV-2 infection in vitro, *British Journal of Pharmacology*

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