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Discussion

Plasma serotonin reply to E.F. Marshall and M. Leitch

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The comments from Drs Marshall and Leitch highlight the difficulties in nomenclature when considering a compound primarily located in the platelets of a peripheral blood sample. As these authors point out, whole blood serotonin predominantly represents the serotonin concentration in platelets but will also include that found in the plasma fraction. Studies that have measured platelet serotonin specifically, after extraction of platelets, have expressed the final concentration as nmol serotonin per 10^9 platelets [1].

In our study [2] consideration was given to using whole blood as the sample, since our aim was to show the changes in serotonin concentration in the peripheral circulation caused by the action of fluvoxamine inhibiting serotonin re-uptake at receptors. Although we have successfully used the solid-phase extraction method described to measure whole blood serotonin, the cell lysate can block the columns necessitating re-extraction of that sample. It was decided, therefore, to use 'platelet-rich' plasma as clearly stated in the introduction of our paper. Possibly it would be clearer if we all used the terms 'platelet-rich' and 'platelet-poor' plasma serotonin rather than plain plasma serotonin in the titles of publications as well as in the text.

References

[1] E. Flachaire, C. Beney, A. Berthier, J. Salandre, C. Quincy and B. Renaud, *Clin. Chem.*, 36 (1990) 2117.

[2] J. Keating, L. Drateu, M. Lader and R.A. Sherwood, *J. Chromatogr.*, 617 (1993) 237.

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