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Pharmacology Biochemistry and Behavior

Volume 40, Issue 4, December 1991, Pages 1009-1017

Serotonin receptors and their ligands: A lack of selective agents

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[https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-3057\(91\)90121-H](https://doi.org/10.1016/0091-3057(91)90121-H)

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Abstract

Four major families of serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine; 5-HT) receptors have been identified: 5-HT₁, 5-HT₂, 5-HT₃ and 5-HT₄. At this time, there is a general consensus that the 5-HT₁ family can be further subdivided into 5-HT_{1A}, 5-HT_{1B}, 5-HT_{1C}, 5-HT_{1D}, and 5-HT_{1P} subpopulations. In addition, there are several other populations of less well-defined 5-HT receptors. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss 5-HT receptor nomenclature and the agents that are commonly used to investigate each receptor population in as much as it will serve to provide background for the remainder of the symposium. There is presently available an abundance of serotonergic agents; however, these agents are only semiselective, and none can be considered truly selective for a particular population of 5-HT receptors. As useful as these agents have been for the identification and characterization of 5-HT receptors, there remains a need for the development of new, more selective ligands.



Keywords

Serotonin receptors; 5-HT₁; 5-HT₂; 5-HT₃; 5-HT₄; Ligands; Binding

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