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## Coroner calls for urgent anti-depressant inquiry after doctor blames drug for mother's suicide

By [Daily Mail Reporter](#)

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**A mother-of-two hanged herself while her children watched TV downstairs after anti-depressants turned her into a zombie, an inquest heard**

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A coroner has ordered an urgent investigation into an anti-depressant after it turned a mother-of-two into a 'zombie' before she was found hanging in her attic.

Housewife Yvonne Woodley, 42, visited six GPs who increased her dosage of Citalopram in the months before her death.

But she became more agitated after taking the drug and told people she wanted to die.

Her husband Kevin found her hanging in the loft of the family home in Solihull, West Midlands, on October 25 last year.

Their two daughters, aged ten and 14, were watching TV downstairs at the time.

Birmingham coroner Aiden Cotter called for more research into the drug after experts raised concerns over its side-effects.

The inquest in Birmingham on Monday heard how Yvonne saw six GPs on nine occasions at Solihull's Yew Tree Medical Centre last year.

Doctors increased the dosage of the drug but her mental state continued to deteriorate.

Professor David Healy, an anti-depressants expert at Cardiff University, told the inquest he believed the drug was to blame.

He said: 'I believe the drug was likely to have played a part.

'Yvonne was clearly suffering adverse effects of the drug and it was this that put her at risk.

'If treatment was contributing then putting the dosage up wasn't the thing to do. This is the second inquest regarding this drug I have attended in the past five months. There have also been homicide cases involving it.'

Yvonne's mother Vera Sansbury told the hearing she saw her daughter turn into a 'zombie' after taking the drug.

She said: 'The change in my daughter was remarkable.

'She was a stable, happy, calm person but in three weeks the decline was rapid to a woman who was trembling, had panic attacks and wouldn't make eye contact.

'She was like a zombie. The eyes were blank and flat and there was no emotional response. Yvonne displayed every single side-effect of the drug.'



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**Housewife Yvonne Woodley was discovered in the family home's loft (family home pictured, Solihull, Birmingham) by her husband Kevin**

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The inquest heard that the drug was a common anti-depressant which came with a warning about side-effects.

The effects include agitation and mental turmoil in the first weeks of treatment and trials showed it could increase the risk of suicide.

Recording an open verdict, coroner Aidan Cotter said: 'I cannot be sure of what happened and Mrs Woodley's death may have been an accident as she made a cry for help.

'I will write to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency asking if more research is needed into the drug.'

Dr Christopher Muldoon, representing Lundbeck which manufactures the drug, said: 'The drug is safely used by millions of people but it could cause someone to take their life who had not previously thought of doing so.

'I don't think this was the case with Mrs Woodley as I think it was her underlying depressive illness.'