



## MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

NTSB Medical Office Review

**Lynn Spencer**  
**Air Safety Investigator**  
**Eastern Region Aviation**

---

**Date: January 4, 2021**  
**NTSB Accident Number: ERA20FA101**

---

**On January 4, 2021, the following medical review was provided to me via email by the NTSB Medical Office:**

For this accident, I reviewed the FAA medical case review, autopsy and toxicology reports, personal medical records regarding the pilot, your preliminary report, and discussed the case with you. According to the FAA medical case review, the 76-year-old male pilot had reported 1580 total flight hours as of his last FAA medical exam, dated 5/14/2019. At that time, he was 70 inches tall and weighed 199 pounds. The pilot had reported a history of significant burns and burn scarring, and reported the use of atorvastatin on his last exam (a prescription cholesterol lowering drug). No significant abnormalities were identified, and he was issued a third-class medical certificate without limitations.

According to the autopsy performed by the Office of the District Medical Examiner, the cause of death was blunt impact, and the manner of death was accident. In addition, pulmonary emphysema, and a fatty liver were identified.

Toxicology testing performed by the FAA's Forensic Sciences Laboratory identified fluoxetine and its metabolite norfluoxetine in the pilot's liver and urine. Fluoxetine is an antidepressant often marketed with the name Prozac. It carries this warning, "As with any central-nervous-system-active drug, fluoxetine has the potential to impair judgment, thinking, or motor skills. Patients should be cautioned about operating hazardous machinery, including automobiles, until they are reasonably certain that the drug treatment does not affect them adversely."

Personal medical records were obtained from the pilot's regular physician. According to them, he had a long history of depression and was intermittently treated with fluoxetine. At the last visit, 4 months before the accident, the physician noted he was not currently taking it and was feeling in good spirits. In addition, he had a diagnosis of high cholesterol, for which he was taking atorvastatin.