

Antidepressants in America are Causing Suicide Rates to Soar, Especially among Young Women

By Isabelle Z., *Natural News*



New data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows a significant jump in the suicide rate in America in the years from 1999 to 2014. The rise has been particularly sharp among women and girls. Is it any coincidence that the percentage of Americans who take antidepressants nearly doubled during the same period?

Some parties with vested interests in Big Pharma are trying to blame this increase on the "black box" warning labels that were introduced by the FDA in 2004. These labels warn that the drugs increase the suicide risk in young adults and children, and some people are saying that these warnings are scaring people away from taking antidepressants and that is the real cause of the rise in suicide.

However, it's important to take a look at exactly who is saying this. For example, the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP)'s Christine Moutier has not been shy about blaming the warnings for suicides. Her motivation is clear: Her organization, the AFSP, has financial and other connections to pharmaceutical companies, a fact that was not disclosed when CNN quoted her criticism of the labels in a recent piece.

Antidepressant use nearly doubled

Research simply does not support the theory that the warning labels are reducing antidepressant use. In fact, the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey shows that antidepressant use

jumped from 6.8 percent to 13 percent from 1999 to 2012.

The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP) set out new guidelines suggesting that teens and children who suffer from depression should start any antidepressants at a low dose after the FDA's warning. Nevertheless, 60 percent of children are still starting SSRIs at a higher dose than recommended, according to data from the LifeLink Health Plan Claims Database. They also found that around a quarter of children who started out on a low dose of antidepressants had increased their dosage by the second prescription.

Women more vulnerable than men

Recent suicide risk data shows that suicide rates in women have jumped by 45 percent, while male suicide has gone up by 16 percent. Twenty-five percent of American women in their 40s and 50s take an antidepressant, with women being 2.5 times more likely to turn to these drugs than men.

According to research published in *JAMA Psychiatry*, antidepressants are simply not more effective than therapy when it comes to moderate or severe depression. In addition, cognitive therapy has been shown to decrease suicide attempts by as much as half. Yet the American Psychiatric Association persists in suggesting that medication is the preferred course of treatment for moderate to severe depression. Why? That's where the money is!

A recent review in the *British Medical Journal* showed that antidepressants increased the risk of suicide and aggressive behaviors across all age groups, and in those under the age of 18 in particular. Despite claims to the contrary that are often made by drug manufacturers, the risks of these medications are staggering, with those under 18 having a doubled risk of suicide. The problem is that drug makers hide the most incriminating data from regulators, leading to a "serious underestimation of the harms" linked to these drugs.

The lead author of that study, Professor Peter Gotzsche, said: "Antidepressants don't work in children, that is pretty clear. In the randomized trials, children say that they don't work for them, but they increase their risk of suicide."

He said that the actions of Big Pharma in this regard are unsettling: "What I get out of this colossal under-reporting of suicides is that [antidepressants] likely increase suicides in all ages. ... It is absolutely horrendous that they have such disregard for human lives."

In fact, Eli Lilly is said to have removed drug-induced attempted suicides and suicides in around 90 percent of its trials, instead blaming the suicides on "worsening of depression" or "emotional instability."

It is also worth noting that a number of the recent, highly-publicized mass shootings have been linked to antidepressant use.

What is driving the rise in depression?

While the causes of depression are extremely complex, there are a lot of lifestyle factors that can play a role. For example, a study from University College London found that people who ate diets rich in whole foods such as vegetables, fruits and lean protein were 26 percent less likely to

be depressed, while those who regularly ate processed meat, fried food and refined grains were 58 percent more likely to have clinical depression.

A lack of exercise, being disconnected from nature, heavy metal toxicity and focusing on consumerism are also linked with depression. Eating a healthy diet and exercising regularly can be just as good for your mental health as your physical health!

Sources include:

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