



# Illuminating the Black Box: Antidepressants, Youth and Suicide

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# Disclosures

“Neither I nor my spouse/partner has a relevant financial relationship with a commercial interest to disclose.”



# SUICIDE AND DEPRESSION

- Completed suicide 10-14 year olds
  - Boys 1.6/100,000; Girls 0.6/100,000
- 20% of high school students report suicidal ideation. 10% report suicidal behavior
- Adolescent suicide rate has quadrupled since 1950. Making up 12% of Deaths in Adolescents.

# Black Box Warning

- October 2004:
- FDA directed manufacturers of all anti-depressants to include a warning stating that anti-depressants **MAY** increase the risk of suicidal ideation in behavior in children and adolescents

# Increased Suicidal Ideation on anti-depressants?

- results of FDA evaluation of 24 studies
- 2% risk in placebo vs a 4% risk with anti-depressant medication
- Suicidality in these children did not occur by chance alone

# **SUICIDAL RISK on anti-depressants**

- no deaths / no completed suicides**
- across ALL studies with 4400 children and adolescents**

# SUICIDE

- increased risk of suicide with untreated depression



# THEORIES

- adolescents treated with anti-depressants may be more depressed to begin with
- so more at risk for suicidal ideation
- suicidal ideation elevated with treatment more than 1 anti-depressant
- ?bipolar depression
- ?emerging thought disorder

# RECOMMENDATIONS

- children/adolescents treated with anti-depressants should...
- start on low doses
- get a thorough family history
- be closely monitored for
  - worsening depression
  - emergence of suicidal ideation
  - response to treatment

# **FDA RECOMMENDED MONITORING on anti-depressants**

- suggested frequency of check-ins**
  - weekly for first 4 weeks**
  - bi-weekly for next 4 weeks**
  - end of 3 months**
  - then at least every 3 months**