

# **Already Linked to Suicide, New Research Links SSRI Antidepressants with Violence**

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New research has linked antidepressants, known as selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors or SSRIs, with violent episodes. Researchers found people who took the antidepressant Paxil were twice as likely to have a violent or “hostility event” as those given a placebo. Controversy is nothing new to SSRIs, in 2004 the FDA required the warning labels on these drugs to contain language about suicide risks.

The researchers used data from Britain’s Committee on Safety of Medicines Expert Working Group, legal cases and e-mails from 1,374 patients in response to a British television program on the subject. They found that 60 out of 9,219 people who took Paxil or 0.65 percent, had “a hostility event,” compared to 20 of 6,455 given a placebo, or 0.31 percent. The research appeared online in the journal Public Library of Science-Medicine.

Popular SSRIs include: Celexa, Lexapro, Prozac, Paxil, Zoloft and Luvox. It is still not exactly known why SSRIs help treat depression. It is believed that neurotransmitters, including serotonin, are associated with depression. SSRIs seem to help symptoms of depression by blocking the reabsorption (reuptake) of serotonin by certain nerve cells in the brain. This leaves more serotonin available, which enhances neurotransmission and helps treat depression.