

## Studies on Psychiatric Drugs and Violence

There have been 10 studies in four countries on psychiatric drug-induced violence, homicidal ideation/actions, aggression, mania/psychosis, and hostility. These are as follows:

1. **France, June 07, 2011:** A study published in the European Journal of Clinical Pharmacology found that "...**benzodiazepines** and [**antidepressants** that affect serotonin] are the main pharmacological classes able to induce **aggressive behavior**."<sup>1</sup>
2. **United States, December 01, 2010:** A study in PLoS One took the Food and Drug Administration's Adverse Event Reporting System data, and extracted all "serious adverse event" reports for drugs with 200 or more cases received from 2004 through September 2009. Of the 484 drugs identified, 31 drugs were disproportionately associated with **violence**. These drugs, accounting for 79% of all the violence cases, including **11 antidepressants, 6 sedative/hypnotics and 3 drugs for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder**. The specific cases of violence included: **homicide, physical assaults, cases indicating physical abuse, homicidal ideation, and cases described as violence-relates symptoms**.<sup>2</sup>
3. **United States, April 14, 2010:** A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association concluded that some anti-anxiety drugs have a higher risk of suicidal acts/**violent deaths** than others. They also acknowledge that anti-anxiety drugs in general can have psychotropic effects, including **mood and behavior changes**.<sup>3</sup>
4. **United States, February 1, 2009:** The journal Pediatrics published a study that found spontaneous case reports of patients treated for ADHD with amphetamine/dextroamphetamine (**Adderall**), atomoxetine (**Strattera**), or Methylphenidate (**Ritalin/Concerta/Daytrana**) indicated a likely causal association between each of the drugs and treatment-emergent onset of signs and symptoms of **psychosis** or **mania**, notably hallucinations, in some patients. The authors concluded, "Patients and physicians should be aware that **psychosis** or **mania** arising during drug treatment of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder may represent adverse drug reactions."<sup>4</sup>
5. **United Kingdom, September 01, 2006:** A study published in Public Library of Science Medicine determined that **newer antidepressants** could increase the **risk of violence in people taking them**. They looked specifically at GlaxoSmithKline's **Paxil** and concluded the drug raises the **risk of severe violence** in some people.<sup>5</sup>
6. **United States, September 01, 2004:** A study in the journal Pediatrics revealed that 33% of the patients they studied that were exposed to Atomoxetine (**Strattera**) **exhibited** extreme irritability, **aggression, mania or hypomania [mild-mania]**.<sup>6</sup>
7. **United States, January 26, 2004:** Drug Safety Research issued a special report **on newer antidepressants** that concluded, "The higher than expected numbers of suicidal and **aggressive behaviors** observed in some clinical trials of **antidepressants** in children also can be seen in spontaneous adverse event .... The data show that suicidal/**aggressive**

**behaviors** are reported in both adults and children, but more than twice as often in children."<sup>7</sup>

8. **United States, January 01, 2001:** The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry published a study where the authors found that a significant proportion of psychiatric hospitalizations they reviewed were due to **antidepressant** associated **psychotic or manic symptoms**.<sup>8</sup>
9. **United States, July 01, 1997:** In a Journal of Clinical Psychiatry study, Dr. John Zajecka reported that discontinuation [withdrawal] symptoms after treatment with **Prozac** can cause **"aggressiveness and suicidal impulsivity."**<sup>9</sup>
10. **United Kingdom, December 01, 1995:** In the British journal The Lancet, Dr. Miki Bloch of the National Institute of Mental Health and colleagues gave a report on **patients who became suicidal and homicidal after stopping Paxil, including one man who was distraught over thoughts of harming "his own children."**<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nadege Rouve, Haleh Bagheri, *et al.*, "Prescribed drugs and violence: a case/noncase study in the French Pharmacovigilance Database," European Journal of Clinical Pharmacology, June 7, 2011.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas J. Moore, Joseph Glenmullen, Curt D. Furbert, "Prescription Drugs Associated with Reports of Violence Towards Others," Public Library of Science ONE, Vol. 5, Iss. 12, December 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Elisabetta Patorno, *et al.*, "Anticonvulsant Medications and the Risk of Suicide, Attempted Suicide, or Violent Death," Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 303, No. 14, April 14, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Andrew D. Mosholder, MD, MPH, *et al.*, "Hallucinations and Other Psychotic Symptoms Associated With the Use of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder Drugs in Children," Pediatrics, Vol. 123, No. 2, pp. 611-616, February 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Healy M.D., David, Herxheimer, Andrew, Menkes, David B., "Antidepressants and Violence: Problems at the Interface of Medicine and Law," Public Library of Science Medicine, September 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Theodore A. Henderson, M.D., Ph.D. and Keith Hotman, M.D., "Aggression, Mania, and Hypomania Induction Associated with Atomoxetine," Pediatrics, Vol. 114, No. 3, September 2004.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas J. Moore, "Antidepressant Drugs and Suicidal/Aggressive Behaviors," Drug Safety Research - Special Report, Washington, D.C., January 26, 2004.

<sup>8</sup> Adrian Preda, MD., *et al.*, "Antidepressant-Associated Mania and Psychosis Resulting in Psychiatric Admissions," Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, Vol. 62, No. 1, January 2001.

<sup>9</sup> J. Zajecka, K. Tracy, and S. Mitchell, "Discontinuation Symptoms After Treatment with Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors: A Literature Review," Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, Vol. 58, July 1997.

<sup>10</sup> M. Bloch, S. V. Stager, A.R. Braun and D. R. Rainbow, "Severe Psychiatric Symptoms Associated with Paroxetine Withdrawal," The Lancet, Vol. 346, December 1995.