

[IMAGE]

## **Antidepressants for Children: A Real "Downer"**

Recent studies and reports aren't exactly giving pharmaceutical companies a clean bill of health when it comes to medicines formulated to relieve depression in children. In fact, some of the potential dangers associated with these medications are actually prompting U. S. Senate, House and FDA investigations. It's something you should pay attention to!

Two medical journals recently published the results of trials of antidepressant drugs administered to children. The first study found that previous investigations have "exaggerated the benefits" of antidepressant use in children, and that antidepressant drugs "cannot confidently be recommended as a treatment option for childhood depression."

Ironically, another study found that more and more children are being prescribed antidepressant medication: Between 1998-2002, use by boys increased by 34%, and by girls by 68%. Even worse, preschool children were the fastest-growing group - Among preschool girls, use doubled, and in boys, use increased more than 64%.

But that's not all. The House Energy and Commerce Committee and the Senate Finance Committee have proposed an investigation based on FDA activity, and - not to be outdone - the FDA is initiating its own probe concerning reported links between antidepressants and suicide, with results scheduled for release in summer 2004.

In short: Be careful. As with any childhood health condition, make sure your doctor performs a comprehensive evaluation and discusses conservative management, rather than just "prescribing." If not, in trying to combat your child's depression, you may just well cause your own!

For more on pediatric health, visit [www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/pediatrics/](http://www.chiroweb.com/find/archives/pediatrics/)

### *References:*

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