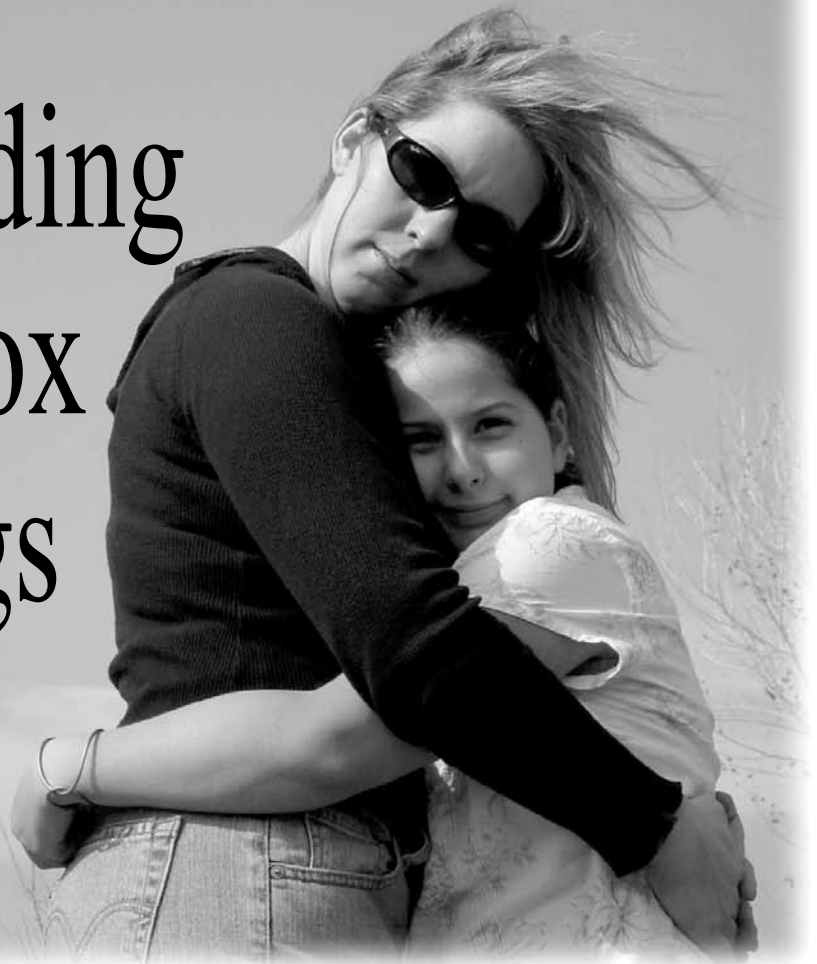


Understanding Black Box Warnings

*Making the best
choice for your family*



Medicine + Therapy = Educated Solution

A black box warning on medicine packages notifies healthcare providers and consumers about an increased risk of suicidal thoughts and behaviors in persons being treated with these medications.

Medicine

- Recent black box warnings of certain medicines have alarmed millions of people on the increased risks of suicide.
- If disorders such as bipolar, anxiety, depression, even ADHD go untreated the risk of death is substantial.
- Every medicine comes with risks. Yet for years, medicine has proved to be an effective treatment, lowering the risk of suicide.

Therapy

- Dealing with any type of disorder is overwhelming. A professional can help you sort out issues and explain how to deal with this.
- A professional can be objective and suggest new solutions to problems.
- A professional can help you weigh the risks and benefits of taking prescribed medications.

Get Educated

- You should discuss all concerns with a trusted health care professional.
- Read the literature on all medications. Understand that black box warnings are there to inform you of potential side affects.
- Whether it's prescribing medicine or providing information - by seeking help and teaming up with your physician, you are getting stronger everyday



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Unlock Your Future

Understanding the Black Box Warning...

By Dr. Jill Fox, M.D.

Being the parent or guardian of a child or teenager is a tough job. It becomes even more challenging when your child has problems. Seeking help is a sign of strength, but sorting through all the information can be distressing. You will hear news stories in the media that sound scary and frightening. Listening to reports on the news about death and suicide are less than comforting, especially when you are trying to make sense of all of this. Having a child with depression, ADHD, bipolar or an anxiety disorder is overwhelming at times. Where do you turn for accurate information?

Most of us believe that the FDA has our best interest in mind and is there to protect all of us. Yet, the recent decisions to put black box warnings on medications commonly prescribed to children has been alarming and questionable. Suicide and death warnings are not to be taken lightly. I am not here to tell you there is no risk if prescribed medications are not taken. The benefits and risks must be weighed before proceeding with any type of treatment. Yet, not getting any treatment for depression, bipolar, or ADHD is an extreme risk that may result in death.

In fact the risk of suicide in a child or adolescent that has an untreated depression is almost 10-fold higher than the risk that prompted the black box warning.

I am not naive enough to believe pharmaceutical companies have our best interest in mind. They sponsor most of the research that is done in this country. With that in mind, it can be difficult to get unbiased information.

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), is an organization that utilizes tax dollars to do research. Information from NIMH should be non-biased. Yet the same researchers that are sponsored by the pharmaceutical companies are doing these studies. I am not indicating that these researchers are unethical, but they

may be biased. Pharmaceutical representatives are handsomely compensated to influence our prescribing practices.

When tragedy strikes a family, it is unimaginable. Losing a child is one of life's most difficult challenges. I have listened to many powerful, disheartening stories from families who have lost children. ***Suicide risk and death must be discussed with all families. The risk is often much greater if the child does not utilize prescribed medication.***

Regardless of how powerful these stories are, we must look at the facts. There is an overwhelming amount of evidence that states antidepressant medications PREVENT suicide risk and/or death. There are more than 200 controlled studies that have been published over the past 50 years stating that stimulant medications can be extremely effective, even life saving for many children and adolescents.

Sorting this all out can be tough. Here are some guidelines to make it easier:

- Turn to professionals you can trust.
- Make sure they read the literature and advise you of all the consequences.
- Ensure your health care professional is open to exploring alternative approaches.

Currently, these alternatives do not have the science behind them, but many natural substances have a low harm vs. benefit ratio. Closing the door to medicines that may help ADHD, major depression, anxiety, or bipolar disorders could cost you your child's life.

GET EDUCATED! BECOME A TEAM MEMBER WITH YOUR CHILD AND PHYSICIAN.

Call Key Life Directions today. We can help.

Sincerely,
Jill M. Fox MD



Key Life Directions

We are a comprehensive wellness center for you and your family. Our professional staff promotes optimal emotional well-being through comprehensive services including emotional and medical interventions. Every person is treated with respect and confidentiality.

We recognize the importance of religion in a person's life and support the strength faith provides.

Here are some of our services:

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- Equine Horse Therapy
- Pet Assisted Therapy
- Stress Management
- Bonding With Your Newborn Support
- Interpersonal Communication
- Charting a course of action with disorders such as ADHD, anxiety, depression

We have the keys to unlock your future. Let us give you the direction you have been looking for. Contact us at:

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