

Akathisia Awareness can Reduce Suicide

Adverse drug effects are a leading cause of patient harm and death

CHICAGO, IL, US, September 19, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- September is Suicide Prevention Month, and September 20th is designated International Akathisia Awareness Day by the Medication-Induced Suicide Prevention and Education Foundation in Memory of Stewart Dolin ([MISSD](#)). Akathisia is a disorder induced by various medications that can cause a person to experience such intense inner restlessness that the sufferer is driven to violence, self-harm, and suicide.

"The COVID-19 epidemic has increased public awareness of adverse drug effects," said Wendy Dolin, founder of

MISSD. "Prescriptions for medications that can cause akathisia have increased since the virus started. In addition, some drugs explored as possible COVID-19 cures can cause akathisia. Other medications associated with akathisia risks include various drugs prescribed for acne, asthma, malaria, and depression. Now more than ever, it is time to talk about akathisia."

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Nobody is immune to akathisia."

Wendy Dolin, MISSD Founder

"The World Health Organization states adverse drug effects are common causes of patient harm affecting millions of people every year," said Dolin. "Unfortunately, akathisia is an adverse drug effect that is frequently misdiagnosed and improperly treated. Nobody is immune

to akathisia."

While mental health challenges do not precipitate akathisia-induced deaths in the same way as in traditional suicides, suicide prevention organizations and crisis hotlines can help reduce these avoidable deaths by asking questions about medications and adverse drug effects.



"Patient safety is a team effort," said Dolin. "Healthcare consumers should obtain informed consent and discuss risk info with their doctors and pharmacists. Carefully read the medication leaflet that accompanies prescriptions, and be aware of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) black box warnings," said Dolin.

The [FDA black box warnings](#) are the most vital warnings pharmaceutical products can carry. Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs) to include Prozac, Zoloft, and Paxil, have FDA black box warnings about suicidality. MISSD recommends that consumers identify a medication buddy to help monitor for any unusual behavior changes whenever stopping, starting, or changing doses of SSRIs and other medications that can cause akathisia.

MISSD's educational resources include an accredited, 1-hour online course, two public health videos, an akathisia podcast series, a YouTube channel, and informative brochures. Dolin will also be discussing akathisia on Susan Guthrie's September 28th "[The Divorce and Beyond](#)" podcast.

"Many suicide prevention organizations and mental health nonprofits have strong financial ties to the pharmaceutical industry," said Dolin. "MISSD takes no funding from the pharmaceutical industry, and all our resources are available to the public at no charge."

Wendy Dolin

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