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The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has warned that the use of [Zoloft](#) or other SSRI [antidepressants](#) during pregnancy can increase a newborn's risk of a circulatory condition known as [persistent pulmonary hypertension of the newborn \(PPHN\)](#).

According to a *New England Journal of Medicine* study cited by the FDA, women who take SSRIs like Zoloft after the 20th week of pregnancy are six times more likely to give birth to a child with PPHN than mothers who did not take antidepressants.

[PPHN](#) is caused by the failure of fetal blood vessels to close after delivery. When a child is still in the womb, a blood vessel called the ductus arteriosus carries blood from the pulmonary artery to the heart, allowing it to skip the lungs. Under normal circumstances, the ductus arteriosus closes once a baby starts breathing after it is born, letting blood flow to the lungs where it can receive oxygen.

In children born with PPHN, the ductus arteriosus fails to close. As a result, even though a child is breathing normally, the blood does not receive enough oxygen. If this lack of oxygen is not corrected, it could quickly lead to serious health problems, including heart failure, kidney failure, other organ damage, seizures, hemorrhages, shock or death.

Doctors have been able to develop surgeries and other medical treatments to help children born with PPHN. However, many children who are born with this condition will suffer from lifelong developmental or physical problems, including seizure disorders, breathing problems, developmental delays, problems hearing and neurological deficits.

If you or a loved one used [Zoloft during pregnancy](#) and gave birth to a child with PPHN or other [birth defects](#), you may qualify to file a [lawsuit](#). For a free legal evaluation, contact the lawyers at Hissey Kientz, LLP by calling toll-free at 1-866-275-4454, or by filling out a [free case evaluation form](#).