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Anti-depressants could backfire for teens

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By Brad Woodard / 11 News

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By the time Kayla Beltran turned 18, family members say she was dealing with emotions not uncommon among those in her age group.



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The makers of Lexapro have warned that children and adolescents taking the drug may have increased thoughts of suicide.

“The hormones begin raging. You just fascinate between highs and lows. Typical for most teenagers,” says Kayla’s father, Ray.

But when the highs became higher and the lows lower, a doctor placed Kayla on Lexapro.

The number one prescribed anti depressant of it’s kind.

Six weeks later...six months after he 18th birthday Kayla hung herself.

Documenting her final act on earth, with her cell phone camera.

Kayla's father contends that what was supposed to give his daughter the power to enjoy life led her to end it.

He plans to sue. "I knew my daughter. She wouldn't have done this. The medication has everything to do with it."

For some time now, the makers of Lexapro have warned that children and adolescents taking the drug may have increased thoughts of suicide.

Although the FDA recently came out and said that warning should be extended to include 18 to 24-year-olds, this is not an open and shut case, thanks in large part to a Texas law from 2003.

Tort reform essentially limiting your ability to sue a drug maker because of inadequate warnings.

Although it was sold as a way of weeding out frivolous lawsuits.

"It's not about kicking out lawsuits that don't belong in the system. It's about protecting the pocketbooks of corporations as is evidenced by this case. You can't get more serious than death," said attorney Denman Heard.

Experts say this is a potentially landmark case, that could not only have implications for the thousands of Texas who take anti-depressants but for those who take any kind of prescription medication at all.

The maker of Lexapro is Forest Pharmaceuticals.