

Sage Therapeutics surges on postpartum depression drug study

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A drug to treat severe postpartum depression showed positive results in a mid-stage study, sending shares developer Sage Therapeutics skyrocketing Tuesday.

There are no [approved drugs](#) that specifically treat a type of depression that, according to the American Psychological Association, afflicts up to one in seven women who give birth.

The Sage [drug](#) was given to 10 patients and 11 others received a placebo. The company says that 60 hours after treatment, the women who took its drug had a significant reduction in their scores on a survey that is used to measure levels of depression. The patients who got the drug also had lower reading at the end of the 30-day study.

All of the patients in the study had had a child less than six months earlier, and they had suffered at least one episode of [major depression](#) late in pregnancy or within a month of giving birth.

Postpartum depression includes feelings of extreme sadness, anxiety and exhaustion that can make it hard for new mothers to care for themselves or others, according to The National Institutes of Mental Health

Seven of the 10 patients who got the drug from Sage were in remission from their [depression](#) at 60 hours, according to the company. That compares with only one of the 11 placebo patients.

Sage Therapeutics doesn't have any drugs on the market. The drug in its most recent study is called SAGE-547, and Sage is conducting late-stage tests of the same drug as a treatment for a rare seizure disorder. It's further away from approval as a treatment for [postpartum depression](#). SAGE-547 is given intravenously and the Cambridge, Massachusetts, company said Tuesday that it will speed up work on an oral version of the drug.

Shares of Sage Therapeutics jumped almost 40 percent, or \$12.87, to \$46.42 in early trading.

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