

SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

August 2020

How is duration of untreated psychosis (DUP) related to outcomes?

DUP is generally determined as the time from the onset of psychotic symptoms to the initiation of treatment or first clinical presentation, when a diagnosis of first-episode psychosis may be given. This diagnosis is distinct from first-episode schizophrenia, which requires a spectrum of symptoms to be present for some time. Longer DUP has been associated with poorer prognosis and is thought to be a predictor of the likelihood and extent of recovery. As such, understanding the effects of DUP is particularly important because it is potentially modifiable.

What is the evidence for DUP and outcomes?

Moderate to high quality evidence indicates longer DUP, particularly over 9 months, is associated with more severe symptoms, including symptoms of depression and anxiety, and poor social and overall functioning, quality of life, and low response to treatment. Moderate quality evidence also suggests less likelihood of remission with a longer DUP. Effect sizes were all small to medium-sized.

Moderate quality evidence finds a large effect of increased risk of homicide, and a small effect of increased risk of deliberate self-harm with longer DUP.

Moderate quality evidence finds brain structural anomalies in people with first-episode psychosis are not consistently associated with length of DUP.

For more information see the technical table

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

We are able to make significant advances due to the generosity of countless people. Your donation allows us to continue to work towards transforming lives. For information on how you can support our research, phone **1300 888 019** or make a secure donation at neura.edu.au/donate/schizophrenia.



NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.

Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.

Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.

While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about schizophrenia or its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.