



NeuRA

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What are anticholinergics?

Anticholinergics block the action of the neurotransmitter acetylcholine. Anticholinergic medications may have some utility for the treatment of side effects of antipsychotic medications, including movement disorders like akathisia (a type of restlessness, a common side effect of many neuroleptics), as well as excessive salivation. Adjunct medications prescribed to treat such side effects may contribute to increasing adherence to antipsychotic medications, and reduce the risk of psychotic relapse.

What is the evidence for anticholinergics?

Moderate quality evidence suggests small to medium-sized effects of greater improvement in hypersalivation with astemizole or propantheline over placebo, and no differences in adverse effects. There is moderate to low quality evidence for greater improvement in hypersalivation with propantheline over astemizole, with no differences in adverse effects.

Moderate to low quality evidence finds a significant benefit of isocarboxazid (MAO inhibitor) over the anticholinergic procyclidine for tardive dyskinesia.

For more information see the technical table



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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.

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.