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SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

September 2020

What are antidepressants?

A supplementary, or adjunctive, treatment is administered in conjunction with a patient's ongoing antipsychotic therapy. Antidepressants have been proposed as an additional therapy to standard antipsychotic treatments, in an attempt to improve functional outcomes and treat symptoms that are not addressed by the antipsychotic medication alone. Antidepressant medications have been studied as treatments for the symptoms of schizophrenia, particularly negative symptoms, as well as for treating people with comorbid schizophrenia and depression.

What is the evidence for antidepressants?

Moderate quality evidence finds small effects of greater improvement in overall, negative, positive, and depressive symptoms with adjunctive antidepressants. The effect size was largest for negative symptoms and smallest for positive symptoms.

Moderate to high quality evidence finds a medium-sized effect of more smoking cessation with adjunctive bupropion than with placebo, which was maintained at six months follow-up.

Moderate quality evidence finds small benefits of adjunctive antidepressants for global cognition and executive functioning, but not for memory, attention, processing speed, verbal fluency or visuospatial processing.

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.