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SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

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What are benzodiazapines?

Benzodiazepines may be implemented as an adjunct to antipsychotic medication in order to treat acute symptoms of psychosis such as agitation, aggression, irritability, or anxiety. They may also be used to treat side effects of antipsychotic medications such as movement disorders including tardive dyskinesia, however they are associated with their own side effects and are associated with well-established patterns of tolerance and dependence, so they are prescribed with caution.

What is the evidence for benzodiazapines?

Moderate to low quality evidence finds no benefit of adjunctive benzodiazepine for reducing agitation or excitation in the short term (up to 30 minutes); however benzodiazepines may be associated with a faster time to sedation than antipsychotics alone, better global improvements (up to 60 minutes) and lower risk of movement disorders. No benefits were found for other outcomes including the need for additional medication, study attrition, mental state, aggression, or hospitalisation.

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.