



# NeuRA

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## SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

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### What is dementia?

Dementia is characterised by significant cognitive impairment. Symptoms include memory impairment, aphasia (impaired language functioning), apraxia (aberrant movement), agnosia (inability to identify objects, people, sound or smell), and impaired executive functioning (for example, the ability to think abstractly, plan, initiate or stop actions). Other symptoms include behavioural disturbances, anxiety, apathy, delirium, and mood and sleep disturbances. Schizophrenia is also often associated with cognitive and functional decline however, people with dementia show greater cognitive impairment.

### What is the evidence for comorbid dementia?

Moderate quality evidence finds a medium-sized increased risk of dementia in people with schizophrenia. Studies conducted in non-European countries reported the highest risk. There were no differences in the risk according to differences in study design (prospective or retrospective), study quality, study duration (less than or more than 10 years), participant age (under or over 65 years) or sex. Studies adjusted their results for multiple known risk factors for dementia.

Low quality evidence is unable to determine any benefits of rivastigmine, a cholinergic agent, for people with schizophrenia and dementia.

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](http://neura.edu.au/donate/schizophrenia).



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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.*