

# LEARNING DISABILITIES

## SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

June 2020

### What is intellectual disability?

An intellectual disability is impaired intelligence that is measured by an IQ lower than 70. Intellectual disabilities usually present during the first eighteen years of life and may also be known as an intellectual handicap, developmental disability or learning disability. Down Syndrome and Fragile X Syndrome are common causes of intellectual disabilities. It has been suggested that there is an increased risk of psychotic disorders in people with an intellectual disability. Antipsychotic medication is most commonly used to treat people with schizophrenia and intellectual disability, however there is often concern about the detrimental effects of antipsychotics on learning and cognition, and the long-term physical side effects.

### What is the evidence for comorbid intellectual disability?

Moderate to high quality evidence suggests the prevalence rate of schizophrenia in people with an intellectual disability is around 3.5%. The rate is slightly higher in females than in males and higher in mild cases of intellectual disability than in moderate or severe cases. Moderate quality evidence suggests people with schizophrenia and mild/borderline intellectual disability may have more negative symptoms of schizophrenia than people with schizophrenia without an intellectual disability.

For more information see the technical table



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