



# NeuRA

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## SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

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### What is oestrogen?

Oestrogen is a hormone that has been proposed to confer a protective effect for schizophrenia. This theory is based on the observations that women tend to have a later age of onset of schizophrenia than men, and have a second peak of onset after menopause. In women, oestrogen levels drop with age, particularly with the onset of menopause. This protective effect may mean that pre-menopausal women who develop schizophrenia may experience a less severe illness than males. Oestrogens are not used routinely for people with schizophrenia; however some studies have trialed the use of oestrogen as an additional, adjunctive treatment to standard antipsychotic treatment.

### What is the evidence for oestrogen?

High quality evidence indicates a medium-sized effect of adjunctive oestrogen for improving positive and negative symptoms in females with schizophrenia. Low quality evidence is unclear as to the benefit of oestrogen (alone or combined with progesterone) for improving cognitive functioning or 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](http://neura.edu.au/donate/schizophrenia).