



# NeuRA

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SCHIZOPHRENIA LIBRARY

## SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

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### What are the issues concerning parenthood for people with schizophrenia?

People with schizophrenia have reduced fertility rates compared to general population rates. There is interest in determining how genetic factors predisposing people to schizophrenia are maintained in the face of these reduced fertility rates and this could be explained by increased fertility rates in unaffected relatives. Antipsychotic use in pregnant women requires careful consideration of the mother's risk of illness relapse, against the risk of harm or complications for the developing infant (including congenital malformation, or poor obstetric outcomes) if medication is to be continued. However, there is currently very little evidence regarding the use of antipsychotics for schizophrenia during pregnancy and the postpartum period.

### What is the evidence regarding parenthood?

Moderate to high quality evidence suggests people with schizophrenia, particularly men, have fewer offspring than people without schizophrenia. Siblings of people with schizophrenia, particularly brothers, also have fewer offspring than people without schizophrenia, although to a lesser degree.

Moderate quality evidence suggests a small increased risk of heart defect or lower birth weight in newborn infants, and a small increased risk of preterm delivery, but not stillbirth, with exposure to antipsychotics (first or second generation). Low quality evidence is unsure about the risk of termination or spontaneous abortion, and size or malformation in newborn infants.

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.*