



SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

April 2022

How are sex differences related to schizophrenia?

Sex differences have been reported in schizophrenia, including differences between sexes in the age of illness onset, in functioning, in symptom profile, and in the course of illness. This summary table assesses differences in the rates of schizophrenia between males and females as differences in incidence (number of new cases in the population at risk over a specified period of time) and prevalence (proportion of individuals who have the disorder in the population at risk at a specified time point or over a specified time period). Any sex differences in rates of schizophrenia could be due to genetic and/or environmental influences.

What is the evidence for sex differences?

Moderate to high quality evidence shows a small increase in the incidence, but not the prevalence of schizophrenia in males. This effect was found only up until around 40 years of age, with no sex differences between 40 and 50 years of age, then there was higher incidence in females after 50 years of age, possibly due to loss of oestrogen. These results remained after adjusting for year of study, sample size, sampling frame (admission or contact), case ascertainment (clinical, systematic or interview), and diagnostic classification system.

Moderate quality evidence finds male sex was also more common in people assessed as being at ultra high-risk for psychosis; having attenuated psychotic symptoms or brief and limited intermittent psychotic symptoms, as well as genetic risk and functional deterioration.

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.