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SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

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What is treatment resistance?

Antipsychotic medications provide symptom respite and improvement in quality of life for many people with schizophrenia. However, for a subset of people with schizophrenia, antipsychotic medications do not provide adequate relief from symptoms. Treatment-resistant schizophrenia has many definitions that vary depending on the individual study, but a broad definition includes those patients whose symptoms have not responded to antipsychotic medications, or only partially responded.

What is the evidence on treatment-resistant schizophrenia?

Moderate to high quality evidence suggests a general pattern of superiority for olanzapine, clozapine and risperidone over other antipsychotics (first or second generation) for symptom improvement in people with treatment-resistant schizophrenia. There may be fewer extrapyramidal side effects with clozapine or olanzapine than with other antipsychotics.

Augmenting clozapine with aripiprazole may provide some improvement in overall symptoms and may result in less weight gain and lower LDL-cholesterol than with placebo, but aripiprazole may result in more akathisia, agitation and anxiety. There are no significant improvements in symptoms after augmenting clozapine with lamotrigine, topiramate, glycine, risperidone, or sulpiride.

For more information see the technical table



NeuRA

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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.