



SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

August 2020

How is urbanicity related to schizophrenia?

Studies of urbanicity have defined exposure to urban environments in various ways either consisting of urban-rural comparisons or as defined according to population density which can include mixed urban-suburban-rural areas. The majority define urbanicity by degrees of population density, defined either as population per square kilometre or as the number of inhabitants within a defined location (e.g., capital, city, or town). Time of exposure to urbanicity also varies in different studies. Exposure may be assessed at birth, during upbringing or at illness onset. There is evidence that urban settings are associated with higher rates of schizophrenia. It is not clear whether urban living itself is associated with a higher risk for schizophrenia as other factors may influence this association. People with schizophrenia may drift into urban regions because of disability or discrimination, and/or they may be seeking better access to treatment.

What is the evidence for urbanicity?

Moderate to high quality evidence finds a small increase in the incidence (new cases) of schizophrenia with increased urbanicity measured prior to, or after, illness onset. There were no differences found in overall prevalence rates.

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 enefits 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.