



# NeuRA

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## SCHIZOPHRENIA Factsheet

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### What is zotepine?

Second generation antipsychotics (sometimes referred to as 'atypical' antipsychotics) such as zotepine are a newer class of antipsychotic medication than first generation 'typical' antipsychotics. Second generation antipsychotics are effective for the positive symptoms of schizophrenia. It is sometimes claimed that they are more effective than first generation antipsychotics in treating the negative symptoms of schizophrenia. Negative symptoms include a lack of ordinary mental activities such as emotional expression, social engagement, thinking and motivation, whereas positive symptoms include the experiences of perceptual abnormalities (hallucinations) and fixed, false, irrational beliefs (delusions).

Second generation antipsychotics may also cause less extra-pyramidal side effects. These include dyskinesias such as repetitive, involuntary, and purposeless body or facial movements, Parkinsonism (cogwheel muscle rigidity, pill-rolling tremor and reduced or slowed movements), akathisia (motor restlessness, especially in the legs, and resembling agitation) and dystonias such as muscle contractions causing unusual twisting of parts of the body, most often in the neck. These effects are caused by the dopamine receptor antagonist action of these drugs.

### What is the evidence for zotepine?

High quality evidence suggests zotepine results in greater study retention than placebo. Moderate to low quality evidence suggests a greater clinical response with zotepine than placebo, although zotepine may result in more sleep problems.

Compared to first generation antipsychotics in general, high quality evidence suggests zotepine is associated with greater clinical response, with improved global and mental state. Zotepine causes less akathisia than first generation antipsychotics, and may also cause less akathisia and dystonia.

Low quality evidence is unable to determine any differences in mental state between zotepine and clozapine, risperidone or remoxipride. Moderate to low quality evidence suggests zotepine may result in higher levels of extrapyramidal symptoms than clozapine. Low quality evidence is unable to determine any differences in adverse effects between zotepine and risperidone or remoxipride.

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).

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