



BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

July 2020

How are treatments for aggression and agitation relevant to bipolar disorder?

Agitation and/or aggression are sometimes observed during a psychiatric emergency such as in onset of acute psychosis. Agitation typically includes irritability and restlessness, motor or verbal hyperactivity, uncooperativeness, and occasionally aggressive gestures or behaviour. This can pose a risk both to the individual, as well as the attending health care professionals, and so is important to manage this behaviour and prevent potential harm.

What is the evidence for treatments for aggression and agitation?

Moderate to low quality evidence suggests intramuscular olanzapine (10mg x 2 doses + 5mg x 1 dose), inhaled loxapine (5 or 10mg) or intramuscular aripiprazole (9.75 or 15mg) are more effective at reducing agitation in people with bipolar disorder than placebo or lorazepam.

For more information see the technical table

HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

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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 bipolar disorder or its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.