

DOPAMINE



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BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

June 2020

What are dopaminergic modulators?

There is increasing interest in dopamine dysfunction being a putative mechanism underlying the pathogenesis of bipolar disorder. Dopaminergic modulators include stimulants (methylphenidate, amphetamine, and lisdexamphetamine), stimulant-like agents (modafinil and armodafinil), and dopamine agonists (pramipexole). These agents increase dopaminergic neurotransmission and are thought to be useful in the treatment of depressive episodes in bipolar disorder, but not in the context of other psychiatric conditions, and they are also being tested for mania symptoms.

What is the evidence for dopaminergic modulators?

For depression, moderate to high quality evidence suggests a small effect of greater clinical response with adjunctive lisdexamphetamine, pramipexole, armodafinil, modafinil, dexamphetamine, or methylphenidate compared to placebo. Moderate quality evidence also suggests there may be increased remission rates with adjunctive dopaminergic modulators, apart from pramipexole.

For mania, moderate quality evidence suggests medium-sized effects of greater remission rates with adjunctive cariprazine and high-, but not low-dose aripiprazole.

There was an increased risk of nausea with dopaminergic agents than placebo, but no increased risk of switching to mania, no insomnia, restlessness, suicidality, or treatment withdrawal with dopaminergic agents.

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 bipolar disorder 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.