

DOPAMINE



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BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

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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), dopamine agonists (pramipexole), and partial dopamine agonists (aripiprazole, cariprazine, and brexpiprazole). These agents increase dopaminergic neurotransmission and are thought to be useful in the treatment of depressive episodes in bipolar disorder. They are also being tested for mania symptoms.

What is the evidence for dopaminergic modulators?

For depression, moderate to high quality evidence finds a small effect of greater clinical response with lisdexamphetamine, pramipexole, armodafinil, modafinil, dexamphetamine, or methylphenidate than placebo. There may also be increased remission rates with adjunctive dopaminergic modulators, including for those with treatment-resistant bipolar depression. For mania, moderate quality evidence finds 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 compared to placebo, and no increased risk of switching to mania, insomnia, restlessness, suicidality, or treatment withdrawal.

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.

NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) Foundation
T 1300 888 019 F +61 2 9399 1082
ABN 57 008 429 961

Margarete Ainsworth Building
Barker Street, Randwick NSW 2031
PO Box 1165 Randwick Sydney NSW 2031 Australia

neura.edu.au