



# Medications 101

What you should know about antipsychotics

**Psychosis can be treated**, and many people make a good recovery—especially if they get help early. Treatment may be recommended either on an outpatient basis or in hospital. It usually consists of **medication and psychosocial interventions**.

Medications called antipsychotics are usually essential. They relieve symptoms of psychosis and may prevent further episodes of illness.

**ANTIPSYCHOTIC MEDICATION CAN COME IN TWO FORMS:** oral (pills) or injectable (a monthly needle). Talk to your treatment team to see the best option for you.

Like all medications, antipsychotics can come with certain **SIDE EFFECTS**. These can include:

- movement effects
- sedation
- weight gain/diabetes
- dizziness

Your treatment team will check in with you regularly about these side effects and will adjust your medications as needed.

My name:

My medications:

What are my questions about medications?

## PSYCHOSIS & THE BRAIN



Psychosis is believed to be caused, at least in part, by overactivity of a brain chemical called dopamine. Too much dopamine causes some symptoms of psychosis—such as hallucinations (sensing things that aren't there) and delusions (false beliefs).

**Antipsychotic medications work by blocking the dopamine effect.** This blocking helps to make the symptoms of psychosis less overwhelming, but it does not always make them go away completely. People may still hear voices and have delusions, but they are better able to recognize what isn't real and to focus on other things, such as work, school or family.

Help is available. Go to [help4psychosis.ca](https://help4psychosis.ca) to find your local Early Psychosis Intervention Program.

