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Information for the public

Aripiprazole for manic episodes in adolescents with bipolar I disorder

NICE 'technology appraisal guidance' advises on when and how drugs and other treatments should be used in the NHS.

This document is about when **aripiprazole** should be used to treat young people with bipolar I disorder in the NHS in England and Wales. It explains guidance (advice) from NICE (the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence). It is written for young people with bipolar I disorder but it may also be useful for their families or carers or for anyone with an interest in the condition.

It does not describe bipolar I disorder or the treatments in detail – a member of your healthcare team should discuss these with you. You can get more information from the organisations listed on page 4.

This may not be the only possible treatment for bipolar I disorder. Your healthcare team should talk to you about whether it is suitable for you and about other treatment options available.

What has NICE said?

NICE recommends aripiprazole as a possible treatment (for up to 12 weeks) for moderate to severe manic episodes in young people aged 13 and older with bipolar I disorder.

Why has NICE said this?

NICE looks at how well treatments work, and also at how well they work in relation to how much they cost the NHS. NICE recommended aripiprazole because it works as well as other treatments available on the NHS, and having it as a treatment option does not increase costs.

Bipolar I disorder

People with bipolar I disorder have periods (or 'episodes') of mania and periods of depression. During a manic episode, people usually have feelings of elation (extreme happiness or feeling 'high'), or irritability, or both. They may also feel over-confident, sleep less than usual, and be driven to take unnecessary risks. A questionnaire can be used to assess how severe symptoms are.

Aripiprazole

Aripiprazole (also known as Abilify) controls some of the effects of certain chemicals in the brain that are thought to affect thinking, feelings and behaviour.

What does this mean for me?

When NICE recommends a treatment, the NHS must make sure it is available to those people it could help, normally within 3 months of the guidance being issued.

So, if you have bipolar I disorder, and you and your doctor think that aripiprazole is the right treatment for you (see 'What has NICE said?' on page 2), you should be able to have the treatment on the NHS. Please see www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance if you think you are eligible for the treatment but it is not available.

More information

The organisations below can provide more information and support for people with bipolar disorder. NICE is not responsible for the quality or accuracy of any information or advice provided by these organisations.

- Bipolar UK, 020 7931 6480
www.bipolaruk.org.uk
- Rethink Mental Illness, 0300 5000 927
www.rethink.org
- SANE, 0845 767 8000
www.sane.org.uk
- YoungMinds, 0808 802 5544
www.youngminds.org.uk

NHS Choices (www.nhs.uk) may be a good place to find out more. If you live in Wales you should speak to NHS Direct Wales for information on who to contact.

About NICE

NICE provides national guidance and advice to improve health and social care. The guidance is written by independent experts, including healthcare professionals and people representing patients and carers. They consider the evidence on the condition and treatments, the views of patients and carers and the experiences of doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals, and consider the costs involved. Staff working in the NHS are expected to follow this guidance.

To find out more about NICE, its work and how it reaches decisions, see www.nice.org.uk/aboutguidance

This document and other versions of the guidance aimed at healthcare professionals are available at www.nice.org.uk/guidance/TA292

The NICE website has a screen reader service called Browsealoud, which allows you to listen to our guidance. Click on [Accessibility](#) at the bottom of the NICE homepage to use this service.

We encourage NHS and voluntary organisations to use text from this document in their own information about bipolar disorder.

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