

Ropinirole Exacerbated Psychosis in a Patient With Schizophrenia: A Case Study

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Background:

- Ropinirole (Requip) is a dopamine agonist used to treat Parkinson's disease and Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS).
- Limited evidence links dopamine agonists to exacerbation of psychotic symptoms, particularly in schizophrenia.

Case Report Summary:

A 59-year-old male with schizophrenia on dual antipsychotics and ropinirole for RLS presented with breakthrough psychosis despite increasing dual antipsychotics to maximal dose. After ropinirole discontinuation, patient showed rapid clinical improvement and subsequent antipsychotic dose reductions.

Methods:

- Review of patient's clinical history and medical records, including diagnostic tests, treatments, and outcomes.
- Ongoing research: Monitoring the patient's clinical outcome through regular follow-up visits.

References:

Saber WK, Almuallim AR, Algahtani R. Restless Legs Syndrome and the Use of Antipsychotic Medication: An Updated Literature Review. *Cureus*. 2022

Silber MH, Buchfuhrer MJ, Earley CJ, et al. The Management of Restless Legs Syndrome: An Updated Algorithm. *Mayo Clin Proc* 2021.

Xu XM, Liu Y, Jia SY, Dong MX, Cao D, Wei YD. Complementary and alternative therapies for restless legs syndrome: An evidence-based systematic review. *Sleep Med Rev*. 2018

Preliminary Findings:

After discontinuing the ropinirole treatment, the patient's psychosis significantly resolved within a month. The development of acute psychosis associated with the initiation of ropinirole, combined with the clear resolution of symptoms shortly following discontinuation, strongly suggests a causal relationship between the ropinirole and the psychotic breakthrough.

Next Steps/Conclusion:

Further observation of the patient's clinical presentation is planned. Additionally, we aim to continue comparing this case to similar reports to identify any shared patterns and features. Although it has been established that dopamine agonists should be used cautiously due to potential neuropsychiatric side effects, this case suggests that patients with schizophrenia may have an increased risk of a psychotic breakthrough.

Alternatives in Managing RLS:

- Determine Iron Status and treat iron deficiency as indicated
- Manage comorbidities (e.g. sleep disorder)
- Behavioral Strategies- exercise, limiting alcohol use etc.
- Compression devices, light therapy, repetitive TMS, and acupuncture.
- Other medication options: Levodopa, Benzodiazepines, low-potency opioids, gabapentinoids.

Be Mindful of Medication

Choice to treat RLS in

Patients with Schizophrenia



Clinical Timeline

