

Caregiver Discussion Guide on Long-Acting Injectables (LAIs): A Treatment Option for Individuals Living with Bipolar I Disorder and Schizophrenia

As a caregiver, are you interested in learning about treatment options for your loved one living with Schizophrenia or Bipolar I disorder?

This discussion guide outlines important questions for people supporting individuals with Schizophrenia or Bipolar I disorder to consider when talking with healthcare teams about long-acting injectables (LAIs).



Introduction

Long-acting injectables, or LAIs, are a method of delivering medication through an injection that lasts over an extended period of time.

LAIs are received every few weeks or months, depending on the medication. LAIs deliver medication slowly to the body over time to provide a steady level of medicine. LAIs are just one of the potential treatment options, while others may include oral medications or interventions like psychotherapy or talk therapy.

Below are questions to help prepare a discussion about treatment options with your loved one's healthcare team to decide if LAIs are right for them.

Previous Experience

Many individuals living with schizophrenia or bipolar I disorder have unique journeys to find the right medications and treatment plans. Consider these questions about your loved one's past experience and how the answers can help inform your loved one's healthcare team.

- What past treatment options has your loved one tried or thought about?

- What was their experience with past treatment?

- What have you noticed about their behavior and well-being when using these treatments?

- How has past treatment managed their symptoms?

Treatment Goals:

Bringing Together You and Your Loved One's Priorities

It is important to discuss treatment goals with a doctor or healthcare team to help make the right decisions about treatment options. Treatment goals may differ between patients and their caregivers. Consider how your loved one's treatment goals could be impacted by using LAIs. If you do not already know the answers to these questions, you may want to have a conversation with your loved one using the following section to guide your discussion.



Treatment Goals, continued

- What are their long-term treatment goals? What are your long-term treatment goals for your loved one?

- Has the patient shared these goals with their healthcare team?

- Are there similarities and differences between your goals for your loved one's treatment and their goals?

- What support might you need as a caregiver (from a healthcare provider, from their support network, etc.) to help them better understand and reach their treatment goals?

- Have you discussed how LAIs might support your loved one's treatment plan?

JAN	FEB	MARCH ✓	APRIL
MAY	JUNE ✓	JULY	AUGUST
SEPT ✓	OCT	NOV	DEC ✓

Potential Benefits

LAIs can be offered as a potential treatment option for patients with schizophrenia or bipolar I disorder. The following questions may be helpful as you and your loved one think about the potential benefits of LAIs with the healthcare team:

- How might an LAI's gradual release of medication help your loved one manage their symptoms?

- Would taking medication less frequently help them reach treatment goals?

Potential Concerns

There are potential concerns for all medications, including LAIs. Consider these questions when deciding if LAIs are right for your loved one.

- Would they be willing to take their medication by an injection?

- LAIs may take longer to leave the body's system. In the case of an adverse event, or side effect, have you discussed a backup plan with your loved one and their healthcare provider?

- Are LAIs covered by their health insurance plan?

- Are they able to find a healthcare location that provide LAIs near them?

- Do they have a way to get to and from a healthcare location that provides LAIs?
