

# **Differential effects of haloperidol on negative symptoms in drug-naive schizophrenic patients: effects on plasma homovanillic acid**

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## **Abstract**

After 5 weeks of haloperidol, positive symptoms in drug-naive schizophrenic patients substantially subsided. Negative symptoms, although with a different temporal pattern, decreased after the fifth week of haloperidol treatment; specifically, a decrease was seen in anhedonia and affective flattening, whereas avolition-apathy and attentional impairment presented no changes. Alogia showed a decrease during the third week and a trend to return to placebo scores during weeks 4 and 5. Changes in affective flattening, alogia and attentional impairment correlated with changes in positive symptoms. During placebo, plasma homovanillic acid (HVA) correlated with negative symptoms and with changes presented by negative symptoms between the first and the fifth treatment week. These data show that negative symptoms respond differentially to neuroleptics and suggest that avolition-apathy may represent a different behavioral component of the schizophrenia process.