

Agitation

Excessive Motor Activity

- Pacing nervously or angrily
- Rummaging
- Restlessness
- Repetitive movements
- Wandering
- Trying to leave

Verbal Aggression

- Being argumentative
- Bad temper or “flying off the handle”
- Open conflict with others
- Verbally abusive
- Yelling
- Using profanity
- Screaming
- Verbal outbursts
- Insulting others
- Saying “shut up” to others
- Being overly critical

Physical Aggression

- Resisting care
- Grabbing
- Pushing, hitting
- Slamming doors
- Taking things from others
- Destroying property
- Scratching, biting
- Shoving, slapping
- Kicking
- Grabbing things from others
- Spitting

ANY of these behaviours AND Distress

S-CitAD Study Information

Agitation is not just physical violence. As per the International Psychogeriatric Association definition of agitation, it is a broad term, which includes **verbal aggression** (eg. yelling, being argumentative or insulting, using profanity, etc.), **excessive motor activity** (eg. pacing, exit seeking, rummaging, restlessness, etc.) or **physical aggression** (eg. hitting, grabbing, pushing, scratching, etc.). Presence of any of the above behaviours satisfies IPA agitation criteria. Because agitation is common and distressing for Alzheimer's patients and their families, it is important that we try to understand it better so that we can tailor treatments appropriately, identify it earlier, and prevent violence. We hope that treating at the earlier stages prevents violence and minimizes exposure to antipsychotics.

The S-CitAD study is a 3 month clinical trial study that looks at using the antidepressant escitalopram in helping agitation behaviours in patients who have Alzheimer's disease or mixed vascular/AD dementia. Participants will start off receiving **psychosocial interventions**, and the study team will provide extensive support to the family. In addition, we will do lab tests and review medications. After 3 weeks, if agitation has not improved, the participant will be assigned to the **study drug arm**, and will be assigned randomly to either receive escitalopram or a placebo drug for 9 weeks, in addition to the ongoing psychosocial and non-pharmacological interventions. Over the entire study, as needed limited-dose medications are available for sleep disturbances or distressing behaviours. Throughout the entire study, the research team will be taking periodic assessments to get information about a patient's agitation behaviours and their overall health, and actively participate in managing the agitation.

Participants are seen at the Foothills Medical Centre campus. We have a **free Uber account to transport participants** and their caregivers to the Foothills if required, to avoid parking hassles, or for those that are uncomfortable driving.