

# Patients with obesity who took brexpiprazole expressed negative sentiments, disappointment, and frustration with its lack of effectiveness and concern that it was not tested in people like them.

Scan the QR code for a video clip of the brexpiprazole patient interviews



## Abstract

Brexpiprazole (Rexulti) is an atypical antipsychotic medication used for treatment of schizophrenia, major depression, and agitation associated with Alzheimer's disease. Although many people (perhaps 60% of people with schizophrenia) may have obesity, patients with BMI >35 were excluded from clinical trials to support the approval and labeling for this drug. Subsequent research has shown that brexpiprazole pharmacokinetics may be altered in people with obesity, with the result that recommended dosing may not be effective in people with obesity (PwO).

We recruited 9 persons with clinically significant obesity who had also received prescription therapy with brexpiprazole for schizophrenia or depression. Structured qualitative interviews of approximately 20 minutes were conducted with each of these patients to review their experience with the drug and concerns they might have with knowing that the drug was not studied in persons with high body weight. Generative AI provided objective summaries. Lexical methods and a transformer model served to identify common bigrams and sentiment.

These patients expressed negative sentiments, disappointment, and frustration with the medication's effectiveness and the lack of consideration for diverse patient populations, particularly those with higher BMI or obesity. They highlight negative side effects such as disorientation, weight gain, and worsening of mental illness symptoms. Concerns surfaced that FDA did not require and drug companies did not test the drug in PwO.



## Results

Typical patient sentiment: as a patient who is overweight, **"you're either invisible, or the answer is to lose weight, even with mental health."**

Table 1. Example patient sentiment output summary

Positive	Negative	Neutral
Gratitude/ Thankfulness	Frustration/ Annoyance	Realism
Love/Affection	Fear/Anxiety Disappointment Anger Sadness Embarrassment Desperation	Curiosity Acceptance

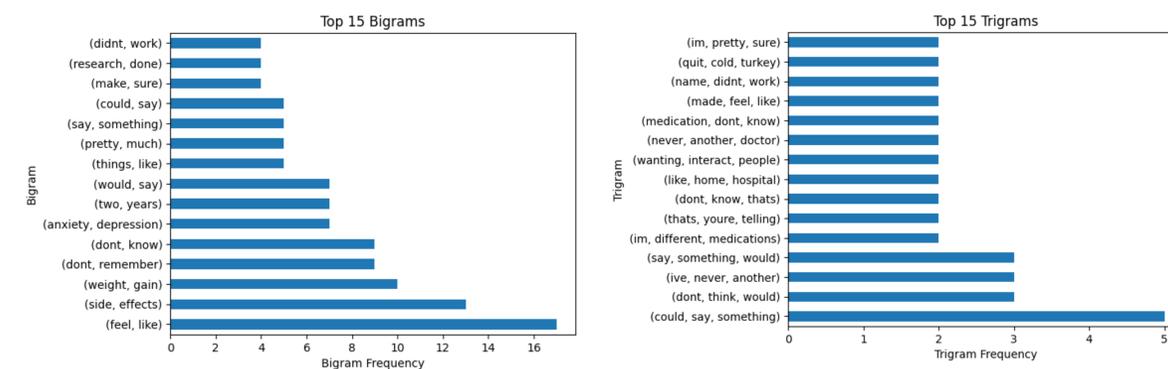


Figure 1. Top 15 bigrams (left) and trigrams (right) from interviews with of patients with obesity who had received brexpiprazole treatment. Patient sentiment was generally negative.

## Conclusions

In qualitative interviews with a small sample of persons with obesity and a clinical need for brexpiprazole, the patients report significant concerns about suboptimal therapy and a lack of consideration of the clinical needs of persons like themselves.

## People with Obesity Who Need Brexpiprazole Have Concerns About Suboptimal Therapy

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