What is the CATIE Alzheimer trial?
CATIE (Clinical Antipsychotic Trials of Intervention Effectiveness) is a nationwide multicenter trial sponsored by the U.S. National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). The goal of the CATIE Alzheimer’s disease trial is to compare the effectiveness of four different medications in treating delusions, agitation, aggression, hallucinations and other serious disruptions in thinking and behavior that may occur in Alzheimer’s disease. The four study medications are already approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to treat symptoms of major mental illnesses characterized by serious disruptions in individuals’ ability to perceive and interpret the world around them.

Although symptoms of these mental illnesses are in some ways similar to behavioral and psychiatric symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease, few clinical studies have tested whether drugs used to treat these conditions are helpful for treating Alzheimer symptoms. Even fewer studies have directly compared the effectiveness of one of these drugs to the benefits of another.

The four drugs involved in this trial are olanzapine (Zyprexa®), quetiapine (Seroquel®), risperidone (Risperdal®) and citalopram (Celexa®). The study is designed so enrollees can try each medication until they find the one that may be most helpful for them. Participants will initially be assigned to take one of the study drugs or a placebo (inactive treatment). After two weeks, those assigned to the placebo group will be assigned to one of the active treatments if they have not improved, and enrollees who have not improved on one of the active drugs may switch to another. As the trial progresses, participants who improve on a study medication may stay on it, and those who do not benefit will be offered another active treatment.

Study medications and related medical care will be provided free, and transportation reimbursement is available. In addition, the study team will coordinate care with the participant’s regular health care professional. Participants and their caregivers will also receive basic counseling, psychological support, advice on managing challenging behavior, education and skill development.

Who may participate in this trial?
Individuals with Alzheimer’s disease may be eligible to participate if they are experiencing one or more of the following symptoms:
- Delusions or irrational ideas, such as believing that “someone is out to get them” or that their caregivers are not who they say they are
- Agitation — being restless or easily upset
- Physically or verbally aggressive behavior
- Hallucinations — seeing or hearing things that are not actually there

Participants must also have a family member or caregiver available to accompany them to approximately 12 clinic visits over nine months. With some exceptions, enrollees will be allowed to continue taking medications for Alzheimer’s disease and other health conditions. There are study sites in Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Texas.

Where can I get more information?
To find a site near you or to request an information sheet prepared by CATIE, please call our 24/7 Nationwide Contact Center Helpline at 1.800.272.3900 or visit the CATIE Web site at http://www.catie.unc.edu/home.htm.

You may also call Karen Dagerman, CATIE Alzheimer’s Disease Study project manager, at 1.323.442.3538 or e-mail her at dagerman@usc.edu.

Information about the trial can also be accessed through the Clinical Trials section of the Alzheimer’s Association Web site at www.alz.org/.
The Alzheimer’s Association, the world leader in Alzheimer research, care and support, is dedicated to finding prevention methods, treatments and an eventual cure for Alzheimer’s.

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