

Clinical-Medical Image

Imaging Schizophrenia and Mood Disorders: A Clinical Neuropsychiatric Atlas

Sophie Herba*

Department of Psychology, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada

Brief Report

Advances in neuroimaging have profoundly enhanced the understanding of schizophrenia and mood disorders, offering a visual and functional map of the brain's intricate networks involved in emotion, cognition and perception. A clinical neuropsychiatric atlas that compiles these imaging findings serves as an invaluable reference for clinicians and researchers, bridging the gap between psychiatry and neuroscience. Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), Functional MRI (fMRI), Diffusion Tensor Imaging (DTI) and Positron Emission Tomography (PET) are central tools in this endeavor, allowing for detailed visualization of structural and functional brain alterations. By correlating neuroimaging features with clinical presentations, such an atlas facilitates more precise diagnosis, prognostication and individualized treatment strategies in complex psychiatric conditions.

In schizophrenia, imaging studies consistently reveal abnormalities in both brain structure and function. Structural MRI often demonstrates reduced gray matter volume in the prefrontal cortex, temporal lobes and hippocampus regions critical for executive function, memory and perception. fMRI has identified disrupted connectivity between these areas, particularly within the default mode and salience networks, contributing to the disorganized thought processes and hallucinations characteristic of the disorder. PET imaging has further highlighted dopaminergic dysregulation, especially in the striatum, reinforcing the neurochemical basis of psychosis [1].

Mood disorders, including major depressive disorder and bipolar disorder, exhibit distinct yet overlapping imaging patterns that reflect the complexity of emotional regulation. MRI and fMRI studies show functional hypoactivity in the prefrontal cortex, coupled with hyperactivity in the amygdala and anterior cingulate cortex, regions that mediate emotional processing and stress response. Diffusion imaging provides insights into white matter integrity, demonstrating disrupted connectivity in fronto-limbic pathways that may underlie affective dysregulation. These findings not only elucidate the pathophysiology of mood disorders but also support early detection, relapse prediction and response monitoring through imaging biomarkers.

A clinical neuropsychiatric atlas that integrates imaging features of schizophrenia and mood disorders offers immense educational and diagnostic value. It allows practitioners to visually compare typical and atypical presentations, understand neurobiological mechanisms and correlate imaging findings with clinical symptoms and outcomes. By combining structural, functional and molecular perspectives, the atlas serves as a guide for both clinical decision-making and research innovation. Ultimately, such an atlas represents a vital step toward precision neuropsychiatry, where brain imaging serves not merely as a diagnostic adjunct but as a foundation for understanding and treating the mind through the lens of the brain [2].

Keywords: Schizophrenia Imaging; Mood Disorders; Neuropsychiatric Atlas

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Conflict of Interest

None.

References

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*Corresponding author: Sophie Herba, Department of Psychology, Concordia University, Montreal, Canada; E-mail: herba.sophie@concordia.ca

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