dopamine hypothesis states that messages from neurons can transmit dopamine too often leading to symptoms of sz. Sznicos are thought to have higher numbers of d2 receptors on receiving neurons leading to dopamine binding. The key role of dopamine within the development of sz is highlighted in three areas. Firstly, amphetamines are a dopamine agonist that stimulates nerve cells containing dopamine causing the synapse to be flooded- large doses of this drug leads to delusions similar to a sznic episode. Secondly, people with parkinsons disease have low levels of dopamine. It has been found people with the disease who take L-Dopa to raise dopamine levels can develop sznic symptoms. Finally, ant psychotics block DPreceptors, eliminating symptoms of SZ such as hallucinations, therefore strengthening the case for dopamine being a contributor in sz.

Kessler used PET scans to compare Sznics with non suffers, the former had elevated receptors in the fore brain, suggesting dopamine is important in the development of sz. Version found similar results looking at post mortems of those who had sz, he found they had excess DP levels in the limbic system.

Finally, Andreasson indirectly supports the dopamine hypothesis, her study found service recruits in Sweden who regularly used cannabis were 6x more likely to develop sz. Those who used the drug more than 50x were most likely to develop sz as the use of cannabis is thought to cause many changes in neurotransmitter functions.

However, there is research that has found little evidence for the dopamine hypothesis. Copolov and crook found that PET scans have failed to find evidence of altered dopamine activity in the brains f those with sz. Another major problem is that drugs used to treat SZ can actually increase dopamine levels. Harazc found that most of those with high dopamine levels had received anti psychotic drugs compared to those who had not received medication.

Most of the research into sz symptomatology and dopamine levels is inconclusive; we cannot be sure if dopamine causes sz or if the condition of sz produces excess dopamine.