

Schizophrenia



What is Schizophrenia?

Schizophrenia interferes with a person's ability to:

- Think clearly
- Distinguish reality from fantasy
- Manage emotions
- Make decisions
- Relate to others

What are the causes of schizophrenia?

Like many other medical illnesses such as cancer or diabetes, schizophrenia seems to be caused by a combination of problems including genetic vulnerability and environmental factors that occur during a person's development.

The symptoms of schizophrenia include:

Positive Symptoms or "psychotic" symptoms:

- When describing Schizophrenia symptoms, positive does not mean good. It means the strongest outward symptoms of the disorder.
- The positive symptoms include delusions and hallucinations because the person has lost touch with reality in certain important ways.

Delusions cause one to believe that people are:

- Reading their thoughts or plotting against them
- Secretly monitoring and threatening them
- That they can control other people's minds

Hallucinations cause;

- People to hear or see things that are not there

Disorganized symptoms include;

- Confused thinking
- Confused speech
- Behavior that does not make sense

Examples include:

- Trouble speaking in clear sentences
- Moving more slowly
- Repeating rhythmic gestures
- Walking in circles or pacing
- Having trouble making sense of everyday sights, sounds, and feelings

Negative Symptoms include;

- Emotional flatness or lack of expression
- An inability to start and follow through with activities
- Speech that is brief and lacks content
- A lack of pleasure or interest in life

"Negative" does not, therefore, refer to a person's attitude, but to a lack of certain characteristics that should be there. Schizophrenia is also associated with changes in cognition and also affects mood.

How is Schizophrenia treated?

Psychosocial Rehabilitation

- Research shows that people with schizophrenia who attend psychosocial rehabilitation programs and continue their medical treatment manage their illness best.

Medication

- Antipsychotics are the primary medication used for schizophrenia that helps in relieving the positive symptoms.

