

# Module 3: Schizophrenia



# What is schizophrenia?

**Schizophrenia** is one of the **psychotic disorders**, mental disorders characterised by difficulties in distinguish reality from unreal. Person can have sensations, feelings or thoughts that distort the view on what is going on around or within him/her. This can cause difficulties in management of emotions, relation to other people and normal functioning.

## Factors that play role in occurrence of schizophrenia

- having particular genes,
- traumatic experience especially in the earliest period of life,
- and damage of the brain that could happen any time during the life span.

Probably, it is caused by an interplay of various biological, psychological and societal factors. This results in impaired function of **neurotransmitters**.

# What is schizophrenia? (continuation)

Schizophrenia can develop suddenly or gradually. Most commonly it occurs between the ages of 15 and 25. It occurs in about 1% of the population everywhere in the world.

Risk factors include lower socioeconomic status, lower education, family history of schizophrenia, stressful situations such as the loss of a loved one, violence in the family or the environment.

Consumption of psychoactive agents can trigger a psychotic episode as well.

Treatment that encompasses both biological\*\* and psychosocial methods\*\*\* is the best choice.



[https://pixabay.com/get/55e3d6444A53a414fd1867dda6d49214b6ac3e45656734f702b7fd596/mental-health-3337018\\_1920.jpg](https://pixabay.com/get/55e3d6444A53a414fd1867dda6d49214b6ac3e45656734f702b7fd596/mental-health-3337018_1920.jpg)

# Behaviour and symptoms of schizophrenia

- **Positive symptoms**

Hallucinations

Delusions

Confused thinking or disorganised  
speech

Movement disorders



- **Negative symptoms**

Problem in decision making

Trouble in interpreting others emotions  
or motives

Suicidal thoughts

Loss of interest in things or activities

Problem with emotions

Whithdrawal from others

# Behaviour to expect

In schizophrenic patients, we may expect to live occasionally or even most of their time **in their world** without having need to communicate with the environment.

**Social isolation** is one of the main characteristics of the disease.

It is often **difficult to motivate them** for simple activities such as maintaining hygiene habits.

Some patients **are not inclined to take medication** or report to a psychiatrist. They often feel that they do not need medication.

They are often very **stingy in verbal expression**, and emotional expression can be the opposite of usual or appropriate.

They may **have unusual eating habits**.

# Behaviour to expect (continuation)

It is of the utmost importance to recognize the

early signs **of a recurrent psychotic episode**

It can be recognized if someone is **listening to voices or has visual hallucinations.**

The **sleep cycle** is often disturbed and is usually the first to be disrupted in relapse of psychotic episode.

Sometimes person can show the **signs of suicidality.**

Many individuals with schizophrenia **rely on the emotional and practical help of family members** to overcome disorder and continue their life.



<https://pixabay.com/illustrations/fear-woman-crack-notch-furrow-615989>

# Do you want to learn more?

Our interactive Resource Pack will give you information about

- concerns that you as caregiver might have
- what can be done
- useful tips how to handle the burden of care
- how to avoid stress and burnout
- how to deal with your emotions
- acceptance of the disorder
- and more!

You will also find exercises and activities for YOU and for the care receiver!



**The Resource Pack will be available in May 2020!**