

SCHIZOPHRENIA

What is schizophrenia?

Schizophrenia is a long term mental disease that affects how brain works. Schizophrenia may change how patient think, feel, and behave. Patient may not be able to know what is real and what is not real. Thoughts may not be clear, or may jump from one topic to another.

What increases the risk for schizophrenia?

There is not exactly know what causes schizophrenia. Stressful events or accidents may trigger symptoms.

The following may increase the risk:

- Family member with schizophrenia.
- Exposed to substances such as amphetamines and opiates.

What are the signs and symptoms of schizophrenia?

Delusions: These are false ideas. Patient may believe that someone is spying on him.

Hallucinations: Patient may see, feel, taste, hear, or smell something that is not real.

Disordered thinking and speech: When you talk, you move from one subject to another in a way that does not make sense. Patient may make up own words or sounds.

Lack of emotion: lack of facial expressions and do not express emotion.

Lack of drive or initiative: Patient have less ability to start and continue a planned activity.

Social withdrawal: Patient avoids gatherings with family and friends.

Cognitive symptoms: These may affect attention, memory, and to plan and organize things.



How is schizophrenia diagnosed?

- History of psychological trauma, such as physical, sexual, or mental abuse.
- Health care provider will ask if he have a history of alcohol or drug abuse.
- Healthcare provider will ask if he want to hurt or kill yourself or others.
- The answers to these questions help healthcare providers to plan treatment.

Which medicines are used to treat schizophrenia?

- **Antipsychotics:** These help decrease psychotic symptoms and severe agitation. Patient may need anti Parkinson medicine to control muscle stiffness, twitches, and restlessness caused by antipsychotic medicines.
- **Antianxiety medicine:** This medicine may be given to decrease anxiety and help feel calm and relaxed.
- **Antidepressants:** These medications will help to reduce the symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- **Mood stabilizers:** These control mood swings.
- **Tranquilizers:** These increase feelings of being calm and relaxed.

What are the risks of schizophrenia?

If untreated, patient's signs and symptoms may get worse. Illness may make it hard to work or get along with others. It may also change the way to eat and sleep. These changes may make suffer other illnesses and diseases. Schizophrenia may also damage brain.

Reference: Micromedex's Care Note Series Online