



Did You Know?

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1 percent of the world's population, or one in every 100 people, will develop schizophrenia in their lifetime. The most common onset is in the teens and 20s. It's uncommon for schizophrenia to be diagnosed before age 12 and after 40.



What is Schizophrenia?

Schizophrenia is a serious mental illness that disrupts people's thought process, alters their perceptions, and flattens their emotions. A person may have trouble managing feelings, making decisions or relating to others. Potential symptoms of schizophrenia may include:

- Hallucinations – Hearing or seeing things that are not real
- Delusions – Believing in something that is not real or true
- Paranoia – Belief that someone or something is a threat
- Disorganized thinking – Trouble with ordering and expressing thoughts as well as keeping thoughts on target
- Denial – Being unaware of having an illness
- Neologisms – Creating meaningless words
- Lacking feeling or emotional flatness
- Not being able to start or finish activities
- No interest in pleasurable things or life
- Trouble with arranging tasks and self-care

We Are Here to Help

Behavioral Healthcare Options, Inc. (BHO) would like to make sure you get the best possible health care. We're here to help you during difficult times in your life. Most mental health conditions today are very treatable. Success in treatment requires time and effort.

We understand the importance of a balanced and healthy life. Our Associate Clinical Administrative Coordinators (ACACs) can help you find appropriate resources. We provide confidential access to professional care and can offer a range of services to help fit your needs.

Please contact us at:

702-364-1484 or toll-free
1-800-873-2246, TTY 711

Tiene derecho a recibir ayuda e información en su idioma sin costo. Para solicitar un intérprete, llame al número de teléfono gratuito para miembros que se encuentra en su tarjeta de identificación del plan o los documentos de su plan.



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Schizophrenia

Getting the Help You Need

Behavioral Healthcare Options, Inc.





Are You at Risk?

Schizophrenia seems to affect men and women equally and in all ethnic groups around the world. Men tend to identify symptoms earlier than women. Symptoms usually begin between the ages of 16 and 30 and schizophrenia is usually identified before age 45.

Your Relatives

Schizophrenia occurs in 1 percent of the general population, but it occurs in 10 percent of people who have a first-degree relative with the disorder, such as a parent, brother or sister. People who have second-degree relatives (aunts, uncles, grandparents, or cousins) with the disease also develop schizophrenia more often than the general population. The risk is highest for an identical twin of a person with schizophrenia. They have a 40 to 65 percent chance of developing the disorder.

Causes

Schizophrenia is now thought to occur when a person inherits certain genes that create a tendency toward the illness.

Various factors in the environment can trigger these genes to become active. Some examples of these factors include:

- Inflammation caused by early viral infections
- Psychosocial stress
- Nutrition
- Birth trauma

Psychosocial Treatment

These types of interventions provide support, education and guidance to people with schizophrenia and their families. It is important that a primary care doctor and the mental health professionals work together to monitor the progress of someone who has schizophrenia.

Antipsychotic Medication

Antipsychotic medications are used to help control many of the symptoms of the illness. They fall into two categories:

- Typical – available since mid-1950s, well understood, relatively inexpensive
- Atypical – available since 1990, perhaps fewer side-effects



Regularly Monitored

It's important that someone taking typical or atypical medication is monitored regularly.

Your primary care doctor and the mental health professionals will work together to monitor:

- Weight
- Blood pressure
- Heart rate
- Blood sugar
- Potential abnormal movements



Family and Friends Can Help

Knowing someone with schizophrenia may change your life. Show this person that you care about them. Learn as much as you can about schizophrenia so you are aware of the symptoms. Understand that problem behaviors are often caused by the illness, and they are beyond the control of the person you care about.



Support Treatment

You can help someone with schizophrenia by encouraging them to continue treatment; keeping the symptoms of schizophrenia under control helps to limit damage caused by the illness.

