

Topic: Schizophrenia

Disorganized Symptoms of Schizophrenia

These are positive symptoms that show that the person can't think clearly or respond as expected. Examples include:

- Talking in sentences that don't make sense or using nonsense words, making it difficult for the person to communicate or hold a conversation
- Shifting quickly from one thought to the next without obvious or logical connections between them
- Moving slowly
- Being unable to make decisions
- Writing excessively but without meaning
- Forgetting or losing things
- Repeating movements or gestures, like pacing or walking in circles
- Having problems making sense of everyday sights, sounds, and feelings

Cognitive Symptoms of Schizophrenia

The person will have trouble:

- Understanding information and using it to make decisions (a doctor might call this poor executive functioning)
- Focusing or paying attention
- Using their information immediately after learning it (this is called working memory)
- Recognizing that they have any of these problems

Negative Symptoms of Schizophrenia

The word "negative" here doesn't mean "bad." It notes the absence of normal behaviors in people with schizophrenia. Negative symptoms of schizophrenia include:

- Lack of emotion or a limited range of emotions
- Withdrawal from family, friends, and social activities
- Less energy
- Speaking less
- Lack of motivation
- Loss of pleasure or interest in life
- Poor hygiene and grooming habits

What Causes Schizophrenia?

The exact cause of schizophrenia isn't known. But like cancer and diabetes, schizophrenia is a real illness with a biological basis. Researchers have uncovered

a number of things that appear to make someone more likely to get schizophrenia, including:

- **Genetics (heredity):** Schizophrenia can run in families, which means a greater *likelihood* to have schizophrenia may be passed on from parents to their children.
- **Brain chemistry and circuits:** People with schizophrenia may not be able to regulate brain chemicals called neurotransmitters that control certain pathways, or "circuits," of nerve cells that affect thinking and behavior.
- **Brain abnormality:** Research has found abnormal brain structure in people with schizophrenia. But this doesn't apply to all people with schizophrenia. It can affect people without the disease.
- **Environment:** Things like viral infections, exposure to toxins like marijuana, or highly stressful situations may trigger schizophrenia in people whose genes make them more likely to get the disorder. Schizophrenia more often surfaces when the body is having hormonal and physical changes, like those that happen during the teen and young adult years.

Source:

Abnormal Psychology in a Changing World by Jeffrey S. Nevid

Essentials of Abnormal Psychology by V. Mark Durand