

## Editorial on Schizophrenia Sophia Roberts\*

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### Editorial

Schizophrenia is a chronic and severe mental disorder affecting 20 million people worldwide. Schizophrenia may be defined as a serious mental disorder in which people interpret reality abnormally.

### Causes of schizophrenia

Experts also are unraveling the causes of the disease by studying genetics, conducting behavioral research, and using advanced imaging to look at the brain's structure and function [1].

### Symptoms

**Positive symptoms:** Those abnormally present: Hallucinations (hearing, seeing or feeling things that are not there), Delusion: fixed false beliefs or suspicions not shared by others in the person's culture and that are firmly held even when there is evidence to the contrary, Thought disorders (These are unusual ways of thinking or processing information), Movement disorders (These include agitated body movements or strange postures).

**Negative symptoms:** Disturbances of emotions (marked apathy or disconnect between reported emotion and what is observed such as facial expression or body language).

**Cognitive symptoms:** Disorganised speech (incoherent or irrelevant speech), Abnormal Behaviour (disorganised behaviour such as wandering aimlessly, mumbling or laughing to self, strange appearance, self-neglect or appearing unkempt).

### Risk factors

Genetics, environment, brain structure and function are the several factors contribute to the risk of developing schizophrenia [2].

### Diagnosis

If symptoms of schizophrenia are present, the doctor will perform a complete medical history and determining a diagnosis of schizophrenia may include:

**Physical exam:** Includes various tests, and possibly blood tests or brain imaging studies, to rule out another physical illness or intoxication as the cause of the symptoms.

**Tests and screenings** (screening for alcohol and drugs).

**Psychiatric evaluation:** A mental health professional checks mental status by observing appearance and demeanor and asking

about thoughts, moods, delusions, hallucinations, substance use, and potential for violence or suicide [3].

A person is diagnosed with schizophrenia if they have at least two of these symptoms for at least 6 months: delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, disorganized ocatatonic behaviour, negative symptoms.

### Treatment

The causes of schizophrenia are complex and are not fully understood, so the goal of schizophrenia treatment is to ease the symptoms and to cut the chances of a relapse, or return of symptoms. Treatments include:

**Antipsychotic medications:** The primary medications used to treat schizophrenia are called antipsychotics and they can help reduce the intensity and frequency of psychotic symptoms. These medications don't cure schizophrenia but help relieve the most troubling symptoms, including delusions, hallucinations, and thinking problems.

**Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC):** Coordinated specialty care (CSC) is a term used to describe recovery-oriented treatment programs for people with first episode psychosis, an early stage of schizophrenia. Psychosocial Therapy: Many psychosocial treatments can help with the behavioral, psychological, social, and occupational problems that go with the illness. Psychosocial therapies include: Rehabilitation, Cognitive remediation, Individual psychotherapy, Family therapy and Group therapy/support groups.

**Assertive community treatment:** This treatment is designed especially for individuals with schizophrenia who are at risk for repeated hospitalizations or homelessness. Here are some things you can do to help your loved one: Remember that their beliefs or hallucinations seem very real to them, Help them get treatment and encourage them to stay in treatment, Be respectful, supportive, and kind without tolerating dangerous or inappropriate behaviour, Tell them that you acknowledge that

everyone has the right to see things their way and Check to see if there are any support groups in your area [3].

## References

1. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseasesconditions/schizophrenia/diagnosis-treatment/drc-20354449>
2. <https://www.who.int/news-room/factsheets/detail/schizophrenia>
3. <https://www.psychiatry.org/patientsfamilies/schizophrenia/what-is-schizophrenia>