


SUNDAY MORNING HEALTH CORNER

What to Know About Schizophrenia – a Serious Mental Health Condition

Schizophrenia is a serious mental health condition.

It is a complex brain disorder that usually develops in early adulthood through the early-thirties.¹ It is a lifelong medical condition, but the symptoms can be managed with proper treatment.

How common is schizophrenia?

 Schizophrenia affects a lot of people. There are 2.4 million Americans living with schizophrenia, and it can interrupt every element of an adult's life.^{2,3}

What are the symptoms?

Adults living with schizophrenia often perceive the world differently from others.⁴ Symptoms can vary from person to person, and may include:



“**Losing touch**” with some aspects of reality, through hallucinations, delusions, unusual ways of thinking.



Disruptions to normal emotions and behaviors, such as agitated body movements, feeling less pleasure or not being able to express emotions as well, or having difficulties in keeping up with day-to-day activities.



Cognitive symptoms, such as having trouble focusing, problems with memory, or difficulties when it comes to understanding or decision making.

How can I make sure I'm getting the right diagnosis and care?

If you or a loved one is experiencing symptoms, talk to a trusted healthcare professional. Discuss your treatment options for supportive therapies, like counseling or group therapy, and medication options, such as daily pills or long-acting injectables (LAIs). Stay connected with a support network, such as friends, family, or clergy.

Remember, there is treatment and there is hope.

If you or a loved one is in crisis, call 911 as soon as possible. If you or a loved one needs someone to talk to, there is confidential support available 24/7 for everyone in the United States by calling **1-800-273-8255** for the National Suicide Prevention Hotline.

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1. National Alliance on Mental Illness. Schizophrenia. <https://www.nami.org/learn-more/mental-health-conditions/schizophrenia>. Accessed April 9, 2020.
2. Perälä J, Suvisaari J, Saarni SI, et al. Lifetime prevalence of psychotic and bipolar I disorders in a general population. *Arch Gen Psychiatry*. 2007;64(1):19-28.
3. U.S. Census Bureau. QuickFacts: United States. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045219>. Accessed June 16, 2020.
4. National Institutes of Mental Health. Mental Health Information Schizophrenia. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/schizophrenia/index.shtml>. Accessed June 3, 2020.



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