

Introduction

Schizophrenia is a mental disorder characterized by a breakdown of thought processes and by poor emotional responsiveness. It most commonly features auditory hallucinations, paranoid or bizarre delusions, or disorganized speech and thinking, and it is accompanied by significant social or occupational dysfunction.

Nursing Diagnosis

Anxiety
Bathing or hygiene self-care deficit
Disabled family coping
Disturbed body image
Disturbed personal identity
Disturbed sensory perception (auditory, visual, kinesthetic)
Disturbed sleep pattern
Disturbed thought processes
Dressing or grooming self-care deficit
Fear
Hopelessness
Imbalanced nutrition: Less than body requirements
Impaired home maintenance
Impaired social interaction
Impaired verbal communication
Ineffective coping
Ineffective role performance
Powerlessness
Risk for injury
Risk for other-directed violence
Risk for self-directed violence
Social isolation

Signs and Symptoms

Usually with schizophrenia, the person's inner world and behavior change notably. Behavior changes might include the following:

- Agitation or anxiety
- Depersonalization (intense anxiety and a feeling of being unreal)
- Loss of appetite
- Loss of hygiene
- Delusions
- Hallucinations (for example, hearing things not actually present)
- Social withdrawal
- The sense of being controlled by outside forces

People with schizophrenia can experience symptoms that may be grouped under the following categories:

- Affective (or mood) symptoms:** most notably depression, accounting for a very high rate of attempted suicide in people suffering from schizophrenia
- Cognitive symptoms:** difficulties attending to and processing of information, in understanding the environment, and in remembering simple tasks
- Negative (or deficit) symptoms:** social withdrawal, difficulty in expressing emotions (in extreme cases called blunted affect), difficulty in taking care of themselves, inability to feel pleasure (These symptoms cause severe impairment and are often mistaken for laziness.)
- Positive symptoms:** hearing voices, suspiciousness, feeling under constant surveillance, delusions, or making up words without a meaning (neologisms)

