

however, counseling is not a substitute for medication.

**Psychosocial Rehabilitation** is a strength-based approach to services; services assist with necessary skills for everyday life, such as managing money, cooking and personal hygiene.

Specific services may include:

- Residential treatment
- Counseling
- Service coordination
- Outreach
- Medication support
- Vocational services
- Self-help and peer support programs

For more detailed descriptions of these services, please read the Adult Mental Health brochure, which provides additional definitions and outlines available treatment services.

## How Can I Get Help?

If you or your family member exhibits some of the above symptoms of schizophrenia, consult your family doctor and ask for an appropriate mental health evaluation and treatment.

You and your family member may be eligible to receive mental health services from the County Mental Health Plan. The County has a toll free number available 24 hours a day, which is staffed



with mental health specialists who can assess your needs and make appropriate referrals. They will be able to talk with you in your preferred language. Their services and phone numbers are listed in the county government pages of your local phone book.

## Where Can I Get More Information?

National Institute of Mental Health  
(888) 826-9438  
<http://www.nimh.nih.gov>

National Mental Health Association  
(800) 969-6642  
<http://www.nmha.org>

National Alliance for the Mentally Ill  
(800)-950-6264  
<http://www.nami.org>

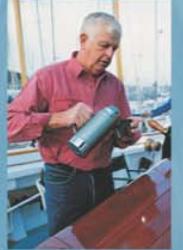
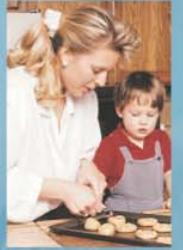


SANTA BARBARA COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF  
**Behavioral Wellness**  
A System of Care and Recovery

1-888-868-1649

Partial funding provided by the California Department of Mental Health.

AVI productions - Monzon producer  
Graphic design - C & M Villagran



# SCHIZOPHRENIA



## What Is Schizophrenia?

Many everyday challenges result in changes in feelings and behaviors. It is important to distinguish between typical behavior changes caused by everyday stress and signs of more serious problems. Problems deserve more attention when they are severe, persistent, and impact an individual's daily activities.

Schizophrenia is a mental disorder that is characterized by a profound disruption in thinking, perception, and emotion. A person with schizophrenia may not be able to think logically, behave appropriately or interact successfully with others. He or she may experience significant problems in one or more major areas of life such as work, school or family.

Schizophrenia occurs in about 1 percent of the world's population. The occurrence of schizophrenia is similar throughout most of the world, regardless of one's culture, racial or socioeconomic group.

## What Are the Signs of Schizophrenia?

People with schizophrenia may show a number of symptoms that develop slowly over time. There are two major categories of symptoms: Positive and Negative.

Positive symptoms (excess or distortion in normal functioning) of schizophrenia include:

- Distorted and false beliefs (delusion). For example, an individual believes that the TV is talking about him or her
- Illogical thinking

- Hearing, seeing or feeling things that do not exist (hallucinations)
- Disorganized speech and behavior

Negative symptoms (loss or deficit in normal functioning) include:

- Lack of emotional expression; the face appears unresponsive and emotionless
- A lack of motivation
- A lack of interest in social events, or being around people
- Agitated motor movements, such as pacing back and forth
- Social isolation or withdrawal
- Decreased fluency and productivity of thought and speech

The precise cause of most mental disorders is not fully understood. In general, mental disorders result from a combination of genetic factors, other biological factors, and environmental factors. Schizophrenia often runs in families, suggesting a strong genetic factor. It is generally believed that



schizophrenia is linked to chemical imbalances in the brain.

Sometimes people suffer severe mental symptoms like schizophrenia due to drug use, medications, or an underlying medical condition. Thus, it is important to consult a physician for possible physical causes of symptoms before concluding that a person has schizophrenia.

## How Is Schizophrenia Treated?

Generally, treatment of schizophrenia includes:

- Medication
- Therapy
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation

**Medication** helps the person with schizophrenia to function more effectively through reducing some of the distressing symptoms such as hallucinations and delusions. The person may experience some unpleasant side effects such as drowsiness, dry mouth, or blurring of vision. Most of these side effects are temporary and can be corrected with the help of a psychiatrist.

**Therapy** helps with symptom management and skill development, and provides support for the person and their family members. Through therapy, the person with schizophrenia can learn coping and problem-solving skills for their daily lives. In the treatment of schizophrenia.

