

What is Schizophrenia ?

Schizophrenia is a complex biochemical brain illness with abnormal levels of certain chemicals and neurotransmitters whose cause is not yet known. The illness affects each person differently and can follow a varying course over time. It generally strikes between the ages of 15 and 30.

What are the Symptoms?

In the early stages, persons with the illness may be unable to relax, concentrate or sleep. They may become reclusive or socially withdrawn. Their performance at school or work may deteriorate along with their personal appearance and social skills.

Schizophrenia may seem to come and go in cycles of remission and relapse. During remission, persons with schizophrenia may seem relatively unaffected. However, in relapse they may experience several of the following symptoms, otherwise known as a psychosis:

- **Hallucinations:** hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling or tasting things that are not really there
- **Delusions:** clinging to steadfast, bizarre beliefs that have no basis in reality
- **Paranoia:** suspicious feelings, irrational thoughts
- **Thought disorder:** disorganized and fragmented thinking leading to incoherent and illogical ideas and speech
- **Flatness of affect:** inability to express appropriate emotions
- **Bizarre behavior:** out of character, abnormal behavior patterns
- **Social withdrawal:** isolation and reclusiveness
- **Cognitive deficits:** memory loss, difficulty in concentrating, planning and decision making
- **Functional deterioration:** loss of skills
- **Depression:** constant feeling of sadness or despair

Schizophrenia...

is NOT a split or multiple personality

is NOT caused by poor parenting
is NOT caused by any guilt, acts or failures of the person affected
is NOT the person's fault
is NOT a mental deficiency
is NOT the family's fault
is NOT a rare disease
is NOT a hopeless disease.

When a family member or a friend is diagnosed with schizophrenia ...

You are **not** alone. Help is available in the form of current and accurate information about schizophrenia, emotional support for you and other members in your family, as well as someone to talk to who understands this brain illness. The Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan can provide options to assist you to cope more effectively.

What to do?

- Seek immediate help for a relative, a friend or yourself.
- Talk to someone who understands the illness and who you find is easy to talk to. This could be a friend, a relative, a family physician, a mental health worker at a local mental health clinic, a teacher or counselor, or someone at the Schizophrenia Society.
- Get all the facts that you can about schizophrenia without delay.
- Join a Schizophrenia Society support group.
- Try to maintain your relationships, avoid isolating yourself.
- **DON'T LOSE HOPE.**

Schizophrenia Theories

Research into schizophrenia is constantly in a state of change with new developments being released at an incredible rate. As for what causes it, so far there are only theories. Most researchers suspect the following factors may contribute:

- Genetics – a predisposition is suspected in some cases
- Viral infections – some studies indicate that a virus-like infection may be involved during the second trimester of pregnancy of the mother affecting the auto-immune system of the child
- Birth Trauma – in other studies certain complications at birth have been correlated with later onset of schizophrenia.
- Research suggests that schizophrenia may be a combination of several “illnesses”

Schizophrenia Facts

- **It is a common and treatable disease.**
- Precise causes are yet unknown. There is no cure.
- Medications are available to correct the imbalance of certain chemicals in the brain and reduce the symptoms.
- It generally strikes young people in their late teens or early twenties.
- Affects 1 in 100 people worldwide regardless of race, culture or social class.
- Persons suffering with schizophrenia occupy eight percent of hospital beds in Canada.
- Annual national cost of Schizophrenia is over \$4.3 billion including direct health care costs of over \$2.3 billion along with an additional \$2.0 billion in direct support costs (welfare, family benefits, community support, etc.).
- Ten to fifteen percent of those affected commit suicide.
- Only 9% of health budgets are spent on mental health and only 4% of government health research funding goes to mental illness.
- 325,000 Canadians are currently affected by schizophrenia.
- Schizophrenia is treatable and recovery is having a good quality of life.



A REASON TO HOPE. THE MEANS TO COPE.
SCHIZOPHRENIA SOCIETY OF SASKATCHEWAN
SOCIÉTÉ DE SCHIZOPHRÉNIE DE LA SASKATCHEWAN
UNE SOURCE D'ESPOIR, DE SOUTIEN ET D'ENTRAIDE.

How to Become a Member:

Complete this portion of the form and attach a cheque or money order for \$20.00 made payable to:

Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan Inc.

and mail to: **Box 305, Regina, SK, S4P 3A1.**

(We also accept Visa & MasterCard. Please call 306-584-2620)

I wish to become a member (\$20.00 annual membership fee per family).....

Make a donation.....

I wish to become a volunteer.....

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

Postal Code: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

I am enclosing \$_____ (family membership)

\$_____ (donation)

Signature: _____

Charitable Registration #: 0707745-11-22
Donations are deductible on income tax return.

All members receive booklets, newsletters and e-mails as part of their membership fee. For more information, please call the provincial office at 306-584-2620.

The Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan Inc. respects your privacy. We do not rent, sell, or trade our mailing lists. The information you provide will help us keep you informed of recent research findings and current public education and awareness resource developments that pertain to schizophrenia.

If at anytime you wish to be removed from any of these contact lists simply contact us by phone at 306-584-2620 or via e-mail at sssprov@sasktel.net and we will gladly accommodate your request.

Regina

Provincial Office and Regina Chapter can be contacted at:
2123 Broad Street, Regina, SK, S4P 1Y6
T 306-584-2620 F 306-584-0525
TF 1-877-584-2620
www.schizophrenia.sk.ca
ssssprov@sasktel.net

Caring and Sharing Meetings & REC Group

For more information call 584-2620 or email the provincial office at sssprov@sasktel.net

Partnership Program

Located at 2123 Broad Street. To become a team member, get more information or to arrange for a presentation, call 584-2369.

Strengthening Families Together

A free 10-session program to help Canadians live with mental illness. For more information and dates and times of these sessions, call 584-2620.

Peer Support Group

In Regina call 584-2620 for a schedule of times.

Saskatoon

Saskatoon Chapter Office is located at :
230 Ave. R South, Room 219
Saskatoon, SK, S7N 2Z1
T 306-374-2224 F 306-477-5649
www.schizophrenia.sk.ca
ssssaskatoon@sasktel.net

Family Support Group

Third Monday of every month.
W.A. Edwards Centre
333—4th Ave. North Saskatoon, SK
7:30 p.m.
Phone: 374-2224

Partnership Program

230 Ave. R South, Room 220
Saskatoon, SK S7M 2Z1
To become a team member, get more information or to arrange for a presentation, Call 374-3220

The REC Group (Recreation, Education and Caring for those living with schizophrenia)

The REC group is active throughout every month with various activities. For information or to join, please call the Saskatoon Chapter office at 374-2224.

SCHIZOPHRENIA

HOPE:

Anticipation, belief, confidence,
desire, faith, reliance, trust.

SCHIZOPHRENIA

COPE:

To deal successfully with or
to handle a situation.



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