**WHAT IS SCHIZOFRENIFORM DISORDER ?**

Schizophreniform disorder is a type of psychotic illness with symptoms similar to those of schizophrenia, but lasting for less than 6 months. Like [schizophrenia](https://www.webmd.com/schizophrenia/ss/slideshow-schizophrenia-overview), Schizophreniform disorder is a type of "psychosis" in which a person cannot tell what is real from what is imagined. It also affects how people think, act, express emotions, and relate to others. About one person in 1,000 develops schizophreniform disorder during his or her lifetime. The disorder happens equally in men and women, although it often strikes men at a younger age, between ages 18 and 24. In women, it most often happens between ages 24 and 35.

According to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental **Disorders**, Fifth Edition (**DSM**-**5**), ‘**Schizophreniform disorder** is characterized by the presence of the symptoms of schizophrenia, including delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, disorganized or catatonic behavior, and  loss of interest in social relationships, lack of motivation and reduction of impairment of speech.’

**SIGN AND SYMPTOMS :**

The following are the symptoms :

* Delusions (false beliefs that the person refuses to give up, even after they get the facts)
* Hallucinations (seeing, hearing, or feeling things that aren’t real)
* Disorganized speech, such as not making sense, using nonsense words, and skipping from one topic to another
* Odd or strange behavior, such as pacing, walking in circles, or writing constantly
* Lack of energy
* Poor hygiene and grooming habits
* Loss of interest or pleasure in life
* Withdrawal from family, friends, and social activities

**CAUSES :**

A mix of factors may be involved, including:

* **Genetics:** A tendency to develop schizophrenia and schizophreniform disorder may pass from parents to their children.
* [**Brain**](https://www.webmd.com/brain/picture-of-the-brain)**structure and function:** People with schizophrenia and schizophreniform disorder may have a disturbance in [brain](https://www.webmd.com/brain/ss/slideshow-concussions-brain-injuries) circuits that manage thinking and perception.
* **Environment:** Poor relationships or very stressful events may trigger schizophreniform disorder in people who have inherited a tendency to develop the illness.

**DIAGNOSIS :**

Medication and psychotherapy (a type of counseling) are both used. People with severe symptoms or who are at risk of hurting themselves or others may need to be hospitalized to get their condition under control.

**Medication:** Antipsychotic drugs are the main [medications](https://www.webmd.com/drugs/index-drugs.aspx) that doctors use to treat the psychotic symptoms of schizophreniform disorder, such as delusions, hallucinations, and disordered thinking.

**Psychotherapy:** The goal is to help the person recognize and learn about the illness and its treatment, set goals, and manage everyday problems related to the condition. It can also help the person handle the feelings of distress linked to the symptoms. Family therapy can help families deal more effectively with a loved one who has schizophreniform disorder.