

Schizophrenia vs Psychosis: The Symptoms

Psychosis isn't a mental disorder by itself. Instead, specific features define the experience we call psychosis. The psychotic symptoms include:

- Hallucinations (sensing things that aren't there)
- Delusions (strongly believing things that aren't true)
- Confusion
- Inability to think clearly or put thoughts together coherently
- Rapid, racing thoughts
- Confused speech (that reflects unclear thinking and racing thoughts)
- Disorganized behavior (erratic, unpredictable, illogical, agitated, inappropriately loud)
- Catatonic behavior (unresponsiveness and holding body in one position for an extended period)

In psychosis, not all of these need be present. Hallucinations and/or delusions are almost always part of psychosis.

In schizophrenia, psychosis is the first criteria that must be met for a [diagnosis of schizophrenia](#). Without psychosis, there is no schizophrenia. However, psychosis alone does not comprise schizophrenia. To have schizophrenia, someone must also experience other symptoms:

- Negative symptoms (reduced emotional expression, loss of motivation, speech and/or sense of pleasure); negative features are prominent
- Level of functioning is greatly disrupted

The difference between psychosis and schizophrenia is that psychosis refers to symptoms and can be part of many things. Schizophrenia is a serious mental illness that includes the symptoms of psychosis.