

## **What is Psychosis**

Psychosis is a group of symptoms that affect the brain. During an episode of psychosis, a person may see or hear things that are not actually there, hold false beliefs, and have difficulty recognizing what is real. Psychosis usually appears between the ages of 16 and 30. Some early warning signs include changes in mood and thinking, feelings of paranoia, and social withdrawal. Recognizing and addressing these early signs as soon as possible is very important for recovery.

## **Signs and Symptoms**

Symptoms of psychosis can impact a person's life and day-to-day activities. The most common symptoms are often first seen in young adults and include extreme lack of self-care and seeing or hearing things that are not there. Someone experiencing psychosis may also become very suspicious, act in ways that seem unusual or inappropriate, isolate themselves, and have trouble communicating their needs. In some cases, symptoms may be severe and individuals may become a risk to themselves or others. Early detection of symptoms is important for treatment and recovery.

## **What Causes Psychosis**

Psychosis can be caused by many different factors, including mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, or depression. It can also be triggered by drug use, developmental conditions, traumatic experiences, or high stress. In addition, alcohol and substance use can increase the risk of psychosis or worsen existing symptoms. Certain medical conditions—such as brain tumors, traumatic brain injuries, or strokes—can also lead to psychosis.

## **How is Psychosis Treated**

Treating psychosis usually involves a combination of medication, therapy, and support. Medication is often the first step in managing symptoms, and it is important to see a psychiatrist regularly to monitor any changes needed in dosage. Individual and group therapy can help people understand and cope with their experiences. Treatment may also include addressing triggers such as substance use or stressful environments. Family education and peer support play a vital role in helping individuals with daily living and maintaining stability. Routine check-ups with a psychiatrist are also a key part of long-term care.

## **Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI)**

Early Psychosis Intervention (EPI) focuses on recognizing and treating the first signs of psychosis as early as possible. It is an evidence-based approach that provides support to individuals experiencing their first episode of psychosis. Early intervention can reduce the severity of symptoms and help people return to school, work, or other daily routines. The goal of early intervention is to minimize the impact of psychosis and support long-term recovery. With early support, individuals can develop healthy coping strategies and improve their overall quality of life.

