

# DETAILED INFORMATION ON SYMPTOMS AND CATEGORIES

The symptoms of psychosis can include:

- negative symptoms
- positive symptoms
- disorganized thoughts and behaviours

## NEGATIVE SYMPTOMS

Symptoms that are negative are those that take away from a person's life experience and are usually treated with therapy. Generally, these are the symptoms that will interfere with how much energy and motivation a person has to carry out their daily activities. These symptoms can also interfere with the ability to stay focused on demanding tasks like school work or learning new skills. They can also create difficulties with socializing and feeling comfortable in new situations. Some examples of negative symptoms are:

- less interest in wanting to be around others
- less interest in things that were once enjoyable
- difficulties finding motivation to do things that need to be done (e.g. taking a shower)
- difficulties with concentration
- difficulty generating thoughts and communicating ideas
- less emotional expression; appearing flat
- discomfort with being touched
- problems with sleeping; sleeplessness, or unusual sleeping patterns
- changes in your eating patterns or eating habits

If you're feeling different than you usually do, it might be a good idea just to talk to your doctor about your health concerns.

## POSITIVE SYMPTOMS

Symptoms that are positive are those symptoms that people experience that they would not experience if they were not having an event of psychosis and these are usually treated with medication. Some examples of positive symptoms are:

- hearing voices that others can't hear (auditory hallucination)
- seeing things that aren't there for others to see (visual hallucination)
- feeling things on your body (sensory hallucinations)
- thinking someone wants to hurt you or your family (paranoia/suspiciousness)
- having thoughts or ideas that don't fit in with the reality you live in, and other people don't share, e.g. like you are God or Jesus, or that you have a special power (delusions)

## DISORGANIZED THINKING AND BEHAVIOUR

When thoughts and speech are muddled and making sense of them may be difficult, or if behaviour is very bizarre or unusual, you can describe them as "disorganized".

- thoughts that race and/or jump around with no clear order
- not able to plan or not able to act on plans
- attention, concentration and memory may be poor
- thoughts may seem blocked, speeded up or slowed down
- difficulty problem solving and processing information
- unusual or bizarre behaviour that does not make sense, is out of character or serves no purpose
- decreased reactions to the environment and what is going on around them

If you think these symptoms are happening in you or someone you love, please talk to your doctor. You do not have to have ALL of these symptoms to be experiencing psychosis.