

KEY TERMS for Schizophrenia

Acute Dystonia: Acute, often painful, sustained contraction of muscles, usually of the head and neck, which typically occur from 2 to 5 days after the introduction of certain antipsychotic medications.

Affect: The outward manifestation of a person's feelings and emotions. Schizophrenia may cause flat, blunted, inappropriate or bizarre affect.

Akathisia: Regular rhythmic movements, usually of the lower limbs; constant pacing may also be seen; often noticed in people taking antipsychotic medications.

Associative looseness: A disturbance of thinking in which ideas shift from one subject to another in an oblique or unrelated manner.

Atypical antipsychotics: A classification of antipsychotic medications, also known as second generation antipsychotics, which commonly interact with serotonin as well as dopamine receptors. They are considered the first line of treatment for psychosis and have a low profile for extrapyramidal side effects.

Clang association: The meaningless rhyming of words, often in a forceful manner.

Concrete thinking: Thinking grounded in immediate experience rather than abstraction. There is an over-emphasis on specific detail as opposed to general and abstract concepts.

Command hallucinations: "Voices," that directs the person to take action.

Conventional antipsychotics: The original classification of antipsychotic medications, also known as typical and first-generation antipsychotics, which work by D₂ receptor antagonism. They are accompanied by a variety of side effects, including extrapyramidal symptoms. They are effective in the treatment of positive symptoms but not for negative symptoms.

Delusions: A false belief held to be true even with evidence to the contrary.

Echolalia: Repeating of the last words spoken by another; mimicry or imitation of the speech of another person.

Echopraxia: Mimicry of imitation of the movements of another person.

Extrapyramidal side effects (EPSs): A variety of signs and symptoms that are often side effect of the use of certain psychotic drugs, particularly the phenothiazines. Three reversible extrapyramidal side effects are acute dystonia, akathisia, and pseudoparkinsonism. A fourth, tardive dyskinesia, is the most serious and not reversible.

Hallucinations: A sense perception for which no external stimulus exists.

Negative symptoms: The absence of something that should be present.

Neologisms: A word a person makes up that has meaning only for that person; often part of a delusional system.

Neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS): A rare and sometimes fatal reaction to high-potency neuroleptic drugs. Symptoms include muscle rigidity, fever, and elevated WBC.

Positive symptoms: The presence of something that is not normally present.

Pseudoparkinsonism: A medication-induced temporary constellation of symptoms associated with Parkinson's disease.

Tardive dyskinesia (TD or TDK): A serious and irreversible side effect of the phenothiazines and related drugs; consists of involuntary tonic muscle spasms typically involving the tongue, fingers, toes, neck, or pelvis.