



DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

# Managing Schizophrenia

If you have schizophrenia, it's important to understand your symptoms and how they affect your life. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

## Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

<b>Antipsychotics</b>	Antipsychotic medication is commonly prescribed to people with schizophrenia. Antipsychotics affect chemicals in the brain, such as serotonin and dopamine, and can reduce delusions and hallucinations.
<b>Cognitive symptoms</b>	Cognitive symptoms may include the inability to focus on a task, problems with working memory, and poor executive function (the ability to absorb and interpret information and make decisions based on that information).
<b>Delusion</b>	A delusion is a false belief that isn't based in reality. While there are many types of delusions, many of the delusions in schizophrenia involve paranoia, such as the belief that people are following you.
<b>Disorganized thinking</b>	Individuals with schizophrenia often exhibit disorganized speech and it's thought that they have disorganized thinking as well. With disorganized thinking, communication is impaired. Answers to questions may be completely unrelated to the topic. Occasionally, speech may involve meaningless words that can't be understood or sentences that don't make sense.
<b>Hallucination</b>	A hallucination involves seeing, hearing, tasting, feeling, or smelling things that aren't really there. Hearing voices is the most common hallucination in schizophrenia.
<b>Negative symptoms</b>	Negative symptoms refer to the reduced ability to function normally because an individual isn't doing something that most people do. Individuals with schizophrenia may lack emotion, not make eye contact, or neglect hygiene.
<b>Positive symptoms</b>	Refers to the presence of symptoms that interfere with a person's ability to function such as hallucinations, delusions, and racing thoughts.



