

**REVIEWED***By Chris Tighe at 12:28 pm, Dec 11, 2017*[Home](#) → [Medical Encyclopedia](#) → Schizoaffective disorderURL of this page: [//medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000930.htm](https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000930.htm)

## Schizoaffective disorder

Schizoaffective disorder is a mental condition that causes both a loss of contact with reality (psychosis) and mood problems (depression or mania).

### Causes

The exact cause of schizoaffective disorder is unknown. Changes in genes and chemicals in the brain (neurotransmitters) may play a role.

Schizoaffective disorder is thought to be less common than schizophrenia and mood disorders. Women may have the condition more often than men. Schizoaffective disorder tends to be rare in children.

### Symptoms

Symptoms of schizoaffective disorder are different in each person. Often, people with schizoaffective disorder seek treatment for problems with mood, daily function, or abnormal thoughts.

Psychosis and mood problems may occur at the same time or by themselves. The disorder may involve cycles of severe symptoms followed by improvement.

The symptoms of schizoaffective disorder can include:

- Changes in appetite and energy
- Disorganized speech that is not logical
- False beliefs (delusions), such as thinking someone is trying to harm you (paranoia) or thinking that special messages are hidden in common places (delusions of reference)
- Lack of concern with hygiene or grooming
- Mood that is either too good, or depressed or irritable
- Problems sleeping
- Problems with concentration
- Sadness or hopelessness