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Schizoaffective disorder

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Schizoaffective disorder is a mental disorder in which a person experiences a combination of schizophrenia symptoms, such as hallucinations or delusions, and mood disorder symptoms, such as depression or mania. The two types of schizoaffective disorder — both of which include some symptoms of schizophrenia — are:

- **Bipolar type**, which includes episodes of mania and sometimes major depression
- **Depressive type**, which includes only major depressive episodes

Schizoaffective disorder may run a unique course in each affected person, so it's not as well-understood or well-defined as other mental health conditions.

Untreated schizoaffective disorder may lead to problems functioning at work, at school and in social situations, causing loneliness and trouble holding down a job or attending school. People with schizoaffective disorder may need assistance and support with daily functioning. Treatment can help manage symptoms and improve quality of life.

Symptoms

Schizoaffective disorder symptoms may vary from person to person. People with the condition experience psychotic symptoms, such as hallucinations or delusions, as well as symptoms of a mood disorder —

Ask your doctor about



3 MONTH
SYMPTOM
CONTROL

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INDICATION

INVEGA TRINZA® (3-month paliperidone palmitate) is a prescription medicine given by injection every 3 months by a healthcare professional and used to treat schizophrenia. INVEGA TRINZA® is used in people who have been treated with INVEGA SUSTENNA® (1-month paliperidone palmitate) for at least 4 months.

INVEGA SUSTENNA® (In-VEY-guh Sust-TEN-u (paliperidone palmitate) is a prescription medicine given by injection by a healthcare professional.

INVEGA SUSTENNA® is used to treat schizophrenia.

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either bipolar type (episodes of mania and sometimes depression) or depressive type (episodes of depression).

The course of schizoaffective disorder usually features cycles of severe symptoms followed by periods of improvement with less severe symptoms.

Signs and symptoms of schizoaffective disorder depend on the type — bipolar or depressive type — and may include, among others:

- Delusions — having false, fixed beliefs, despite evidence to the contrary
- Hallucinations, such as hearing voices or seeing things that aren't there
- Symptoms of depression, such as feeling empty, sad or worthless
- Periods of manic mood or a sudden increase in energy with behavior that's out of character
- Impaired communication, such as only partially answering questions or giving answers that are completely unrelated
- Impaired occupational, academic and social functioning
- Problems with managing personal care, including cleanliness and physical appearance

When to see a doctor

If you think someone you know may have schizoaffective disorder symptoms, talk to that person about your concerns. Although you can't force someone to seek professional help, you can offer encouragement and support and help find a qualified doctor or mental health professional.

If your loved one can't provide his or her own food, clothing or shelter, you may need to call 911 or other emergency responders for help so that your loved one can be evaluated by a mental health professional.

Suicidal thoughts or behavior

Talk of suicide or suicidal behavior may occur in someone with schizoaffective disorder. If you have a loved one who is in danger of attempting suicide or has made a suicide attempt, make sure someone stays with that person. Call 911 or your local emergency number

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immediately. Or, if you can do so safely, take the person to the nearest hospital emergency room.

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Causes

The exact cause of schizoaffective disorder is not known. A combination of factors may contribute to its development, such as genetics and variations in brain chemistry and structure.

Risk factors

Factors that increase the risk of developing schizoaffective disorder include:

- Having a close blood relative who has schizoaffective disorder, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder
- Stressful events that trigger symptoms
- Taking mind-altering (psychoactive or psychotropic) drugs

Complications

People with schizoaffective disorder are at an increased risk of:

- Suicide, suicide attempts or suicidal thoughts
- Social isolation
- Family and interpersonal conflicts
- Unemployment
- Anxiety disorders
- Developing alcohol or other substance abuse problems
- Significant health problems
- Poverty and homelessness

By Mayo Clinic Staff

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Diagnosis & treatment

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