

**What is Psychosis?**

Psychosis is a term that describes persons experiencing changes in their thinking, perception, mood and behaviour that disrupts there life, often losing touch with reality. There are a number of diagnosis including, bipolar, schizophrenia, psychotic depression, and drug induced psychosis.

**Symptoms**

* Depression
* Anxiety, Irritability, Suspiciousness
* Blunted, flat, inappropriate emotion
* Changes in appetite , reduced energy and motivation
* Difficulties with concentration or attention
* Sense of alteration of self others or the outside world
* Odd ideas
* Unusual perceptual experiences
* Sleep disturbances
* Social isolation or withdrawal
* Reduced ability to carry out work or social roles
* Social withdrawal
* Possible mania or depressive episodes

Psychosis will manifest itself in a variety of ways. It can impact a person’s emotions, motivations, thinking and perception of the world, and lead to changes in behavior. Certain symptoms are tied to specific disorders such as Bipolar, or Schizophrenia, but others may indicate general psychosis developing.

Hallucinations are common in those who suffer from psychosis, often involving hearing voices, or smelling, tasting or feeling things that are not there, but are part of the persons perceived reality.

**Treatment:**

**Understanding stigma:** symptoms of psychosis can be difficult for most people to relate to, leading to a social stigma due to a lack of understanding. Stigma can lead to others writing off sufferers of psychosis, assuming they cannot work, or contribute to their community, it’s important to consider people as unique individuals regardless of their diagnosis.

**Preventative treatment-** Referral to a medical specialist, for services such as psychological therapies, cognitive behavioural therapy, family intervention.

**Treatment when experiencing psychosis**— crisis resolution and home treatment, possible hospital treatment may be necessary, assessment for PTSD, antipsychotic medication, physical health checks and supported employment programs

**Self-help for psychosis—** avoid the use of alcohol, cannabis and other drugs, these substances can make recovery harder and interfere with medication. Recognising the pre psychosis episode traits you have, to anticipate when an episode may occur

**Reflection—** learn how your mental health affects you

**Stress management**—Stress can worsen symptoms, make it harder to function and even trigger a relapse, so it’s important to learn positive ways to deal with stress. This might include learning problem-solving skills, coping skills and relaxation skills

**Websites/Hotlines:**

NHS health in mind: 0300 330 5455 [www.healthmind.org.uk](http://www.healthmind.org.uk)

Samaritans: 08457 909090

Silver cloud- free online CBT if you’re feeling worried, stressed or low <https://www1.essex.ac.uk/students/health-and-wellbeing/silvercloud.aspx> .

Employee Assistance Programme, supplied by Validium: Speak to HR/ Line Manager or staff portal for more info

CALM – Campaign against living miserably for men aged 15-35. 0800 58 58 58

Depression UK- Email info@depressionuk.org or visit [www.depressionuk.org](http://www.depressionuk.org)

PANDAS Foundation- support for perinatal depression and psychosis. [www.pandasfoundation.org.uk](http://www.pandasfoundation.org.uk)

Mind: Provide advice and information on mental health -0300 123 3393