



# Health Awareness

## What You Don't Know About Schizophrenia—It's NOT A Split Personality

(NAPSA)—Schizophrenia is a brain disorder that generally strikes people in their late teens or early 20s. It affects people of all races and cultures, and occurs equally in men and women. Far from uncommon, there are more than 2.2 million Americans who live with schizophrenia—about 1 in every 100 people in the U.S. The lives of countless family members and friends can also be seriously impacted when an individual has this illness.

Many people think that someone with schizophrenia has multiple or split personalities, but this is not the case. Schizophrenia can cause people to see and hear things that are not real. People with schizophrenia might think that someone is talking to them when nobody is there, or become paranoid that someone is watching or following them. Schizophrenia may also cause people to feel depressed or uninterested in life, become withdrawn from friends and family, or have difficulty interacting with other people.

### Symptoms and Treatment of Schizophrenia

While there is not yet a cure, the good news is that schizophrenia is a treatable illness with proper diagnosis and medical care. It is important to know that people with schizophrenia need treatment. However, they often do not believe that they are sick because the illness interferes with their ability to separate reality from fantasy—people with schizophrenia believe that their hallucinations and delusions are real. For this reason, family support is very important to help a person realize they are ill and need to see a doctor who specializes in treating mental illnesses. This doctor,



**Schizophrenia is a treatable illness—finding the right medication is important.**

called a psychiatrist, can prescribe medication and set up counseling, the cornerstones of schizophrenia treatment.

Finding the right medication is extremely important, and there are many effective treatments for schizophrenia. However, these medications can have troubling side effects. No single medication works the same for everyone, so finding a medication that helps relieve the symptoms of the illness and also has an acceptable side effect profile for the patient is critical.

ABILIFY™ (aripiprazole) is the most recently approved medication by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for the treatment of schizophrenia. In short-term (4- to 6-week) clinical trials, ABILIFY significantly improved the symptoms of schizophrenia. ABILIFY also has a proven safety profile. Studies have shown that on average, patients' weight changed by 2.2 pounds over the course of a year. For those who

gained significant weight, it varied by Body Mass Index (BMI), a measurement of weight in relation to height. In addition, nearly 9 out of 10 people did not feel tired when taking ABILIFY, and the incidence of involuntary body movements (referred to as extrapyramidal syndrome, or EPS) were comparable to placebo.

When starting treatment, some patients experience side effects such as headache, anxiety, insomnia, nausea, vomiting, sleepiness, lightheadedness, restlessness, and constipation. ABILIFY is available by prescription only. Patients should talk to their physician for more information. More information about schizophrenia and ABILIFY, including full prescribing information, is available at [www.ABILIFY.com](http://www.ABILIFY.com).

### Ongoing support

If you or someone you know is living with schizophrenia or exhibits any of the symptoms of this illness, help is available. In addition to discussing treatment options with a trained medical professional, organizations including the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill ([www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)) and the National Mental Health Association ([www.nmha.org](http://www.nmha.org)) have local chapters throughout the country that can provide information.

Medication, psychological support, family support, vocational rehabilitation, and community support are all important components of a treatment regimen that optimizes care for people with schizophrenia. It is important to realize that schizophrenia can be treated when people work with their treatment team, including their doctor, caseworker and family, to develop and stick with an appropriate treatment plan.