

TAKING CONTROL

What You Can Do
To Manage Your Problems Better



The Community Care For People With Schizophrenia In India (COPSI) Study

What is Schizophrenia?

Schizophrenia

- Severe Mental Illness causes problems in normal brain functioning. It affects the way the person thinks, feels and behaves.
- It usually starts between the age of 15 - 30 years. Most often the illness continues for the next few years.
- It is not very common.
- The illness affects both men and women.
- This illness is sometimes inherited and can run in families.



- With treatment and support, most people with this severe mental illness will improve and manage their lives.

Common Problems in Schizophrenia

Unusual thoughts and experiences

“Someone is going to kill me.”
“People can read my thoughts”

- Strange thoughts and fixed ideas
- Hearing voices, seeing and feeling things that no one else can.



Positive

Common Problems in Schizophrenia



- Wanting to be left alone.
- Reduced interest in talking to others.
- Reduced self care.
- Reduced interest in things that were interesting before.
- Reduced emotional reaction.
- Lack of motivation to do things as before.
- Forgetful and cannot concentrate for long.

Negative

Common Problems in Schizophrenia

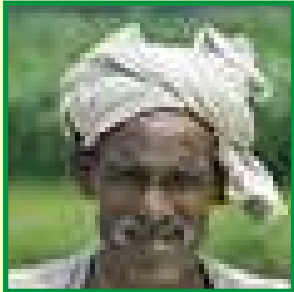
Jumbled thoughts
and lack of attention
and concentration

*I want to go
to the temple
this Sunday. Lets start
cooking. Why do you
look at me?*



Thoughts

Stress and Protective Factors



Symptoms
of
Severe
Mental
Illness

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Taking medicines regularly
- Having a range of activities
- Healthy lifestyle
- Supportive relationships
- Developing new ways of dealing with problems



Stress

- Use of alcohol or other drugs
- Death in family
- Conflict in family
- Migration
- Losing job

Stress 1

Early Warning Signs (EWS)



EWS

Stopping medicines

Change in appetite

Difficulty in concentration

Feeling sad, miserable and angry

Tension and nervousness

Sleep disturbances

Mood swings

EWS

Relapse Management

How to Manage Relapse.

- Hold family meetings after someone notices early warning signs.
- Contact care provider immediately.
- Review whether medicines are being taken regularly.
- Fix meeting with doctor urgently.
- Reduce stress.
- Identify / maximise other social support.



EWS -2

- Reduce / stop use of alcohol or drugs.

What is Stress?

Problems in daily life



Tension / Worries



Fear and unhappiness



Worrying a lot / heart beating quickly



Lack of sleep



Tiredness / Lack of concentration



Difficulty in coping with daily tasks



Stress 2



Managing Schizophrenia better



Take medicines regularly as prescribed



Eat healthy & sleep well



Engage in work



Socialise with family & friends

Precautions



Have a daily routine



Reduce anger



Practice relaxation techniques



Stop drinking & tobacco use



Taking Medicines

- Medication is important to get better.
- Medicines are prescribed to control the symptoms of your illness.
- They will make you feel better within 2 weeks to 1 month.
- These have to be taken regularly even when feeling well.
- The medications are not addictive.
- If you have side effects, consult your care provider immediately.



Medicine

Managing Anger

- Anger can affect your health and well being.
- Think of something else to do, or calm down using the breathing exercises.
- Avoid physical and verbal abuse. It can make things worse.
- If you feel out of control, walk away from the situation that is making you angry.



Anger

Relaxed Breathing

- Sit in a comfortable chair with your back fully supported.
- Choose a relaxing word to say or think of a nice scenery as you breathe in and out slowly.
- Keeping eyes open or closed is up to you. Slowly breathe in and out through the nose normally.
- Pause between breathing in and breathing out.
- Repeat the entire sequence 10 - 20 times.
- Gradually return to normal breathing.



Breathing

- Sit quietly for a minute or two, before carrying on with your daily tasks.

Soothing Scenes



Imagery

Sleeping Well

- Get at least 6 - 8 hours of sleep every night.
- Do not go to bed till you feel sleepy. Try and wake up at the same time every morning.
- If you have difficulty sleeping avoid drinking tea or coffee in the late evening.
- Avoid sleeping in the daytime; keep yourself busy.

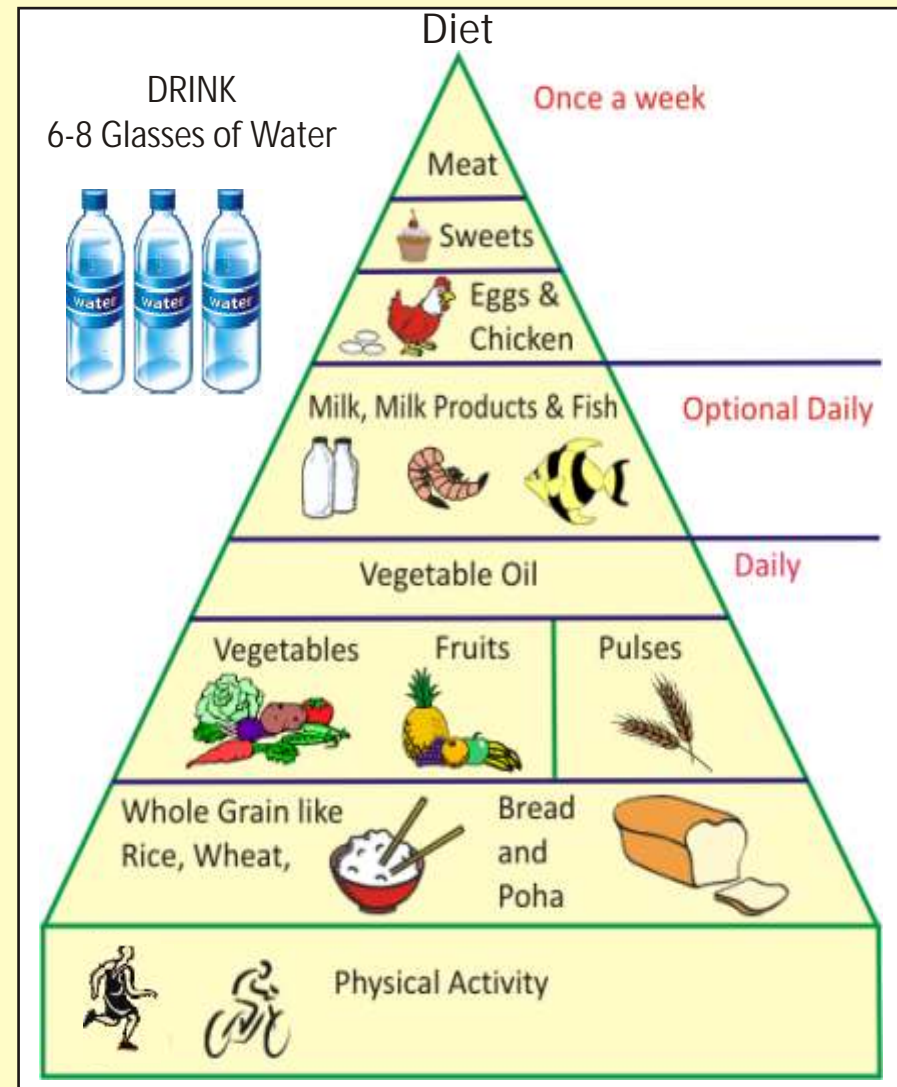


- Don't use alcohol or unnecessary medicine to help you sleep.
- Regular physical exercise will make you sleep better.

Sleep

Managing Weight Gain

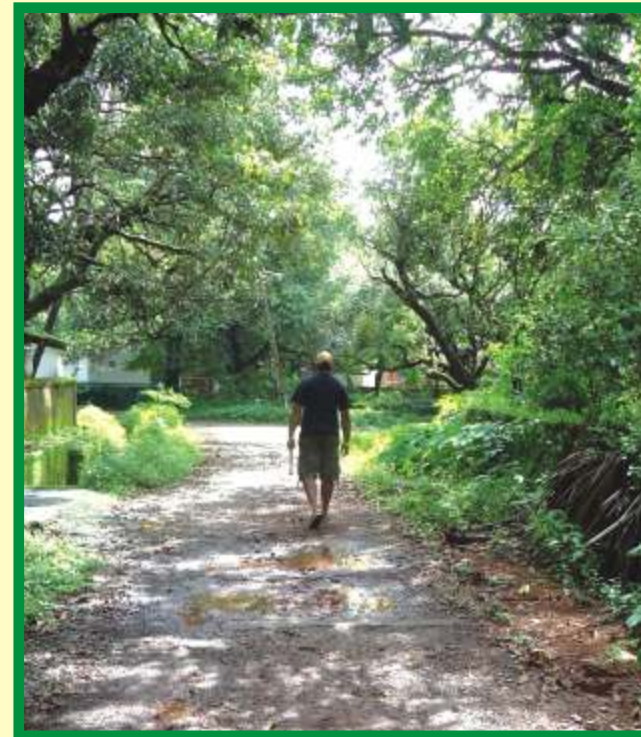
- Some of the medicines you are taking can increase your weight and the risk of diseases like high blood pressure and diabetes.
- Managing your weight is an important part of feeling and staying healthy. You can do this by having a healthy diet and regular physical exercise.
- Your diet should have plenty of fibre as this does not cause weight gain.
- Eat your meals at regular intervals.
- Limit fatty foods. Avoid having deep fried foods like pakoras and vadas regularly.



Staying Healthy Through Exercise

What you can do at home:

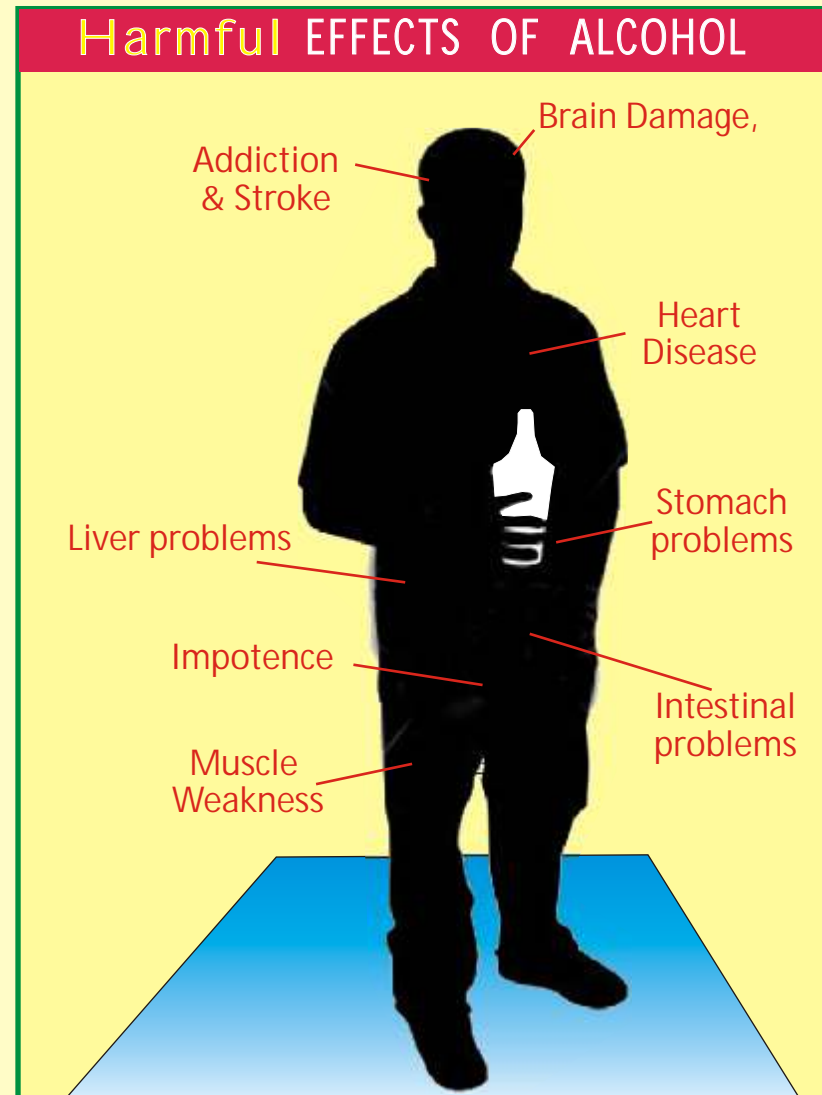
- Do housework yourself instead of hiring someone else to do it.
- Work in the garden.
- Go out for a short walk before breakfast, after dinner or both. Start with 5-10 minutes and work up to 30 minutes.
- Play any sport.



- ## What you can do outside:
- Walking / Jogging / Running
 - Cycling
 - Swimming
 - Other sports activities

Cut Down Drinking

- Drinking alcohol excessively is bad for your health.
- It can affect your liver, brain and may even lead to early death.
- It is easier to get addicted to alcohol - avoid drinking if you can.
- If you are drinking too much, contact your care provider to help you deal with this problem.

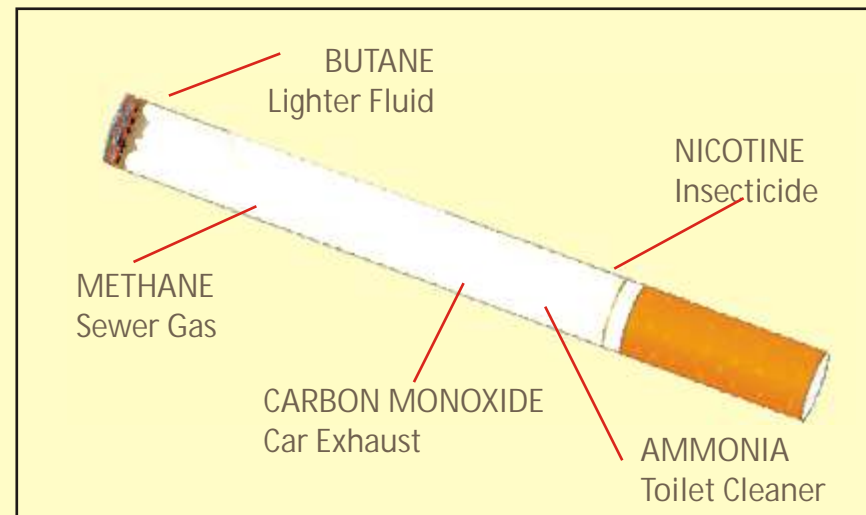


Stop Tobacco

- Smoking or chewing tobacco is extremely dangerous for your health. It can cause cancer, stroke and heart disease and may make you die younger.
- Stop smoking or chewing tobacco as soon as you can - you can do it.
- Find reasons to stop.
- Make a plan to stop.
- Stop and stay away for good.
- If you cannot stop by yourself, contact your care provider to help you give up tobacco use.



Using tobacco may reduce the blood flow and cause impotence



DISCLAIMER:

The photographs used in this Flip Chart are not of actual patients but are just representative; meant to facilitate the production of this free intervention tool. We thank all the persons who agreed to pose as patient subjects for these photos.