Psychosis is a mental health condition affecting thinking and perception and the person’s sense of reality. Symptoms usually start in late adolescence or early adulthood. Psychosis can be caused by several factors. Alcohol or drug abuse (especially cannabis) is one of them. Biological factors, stressful or traumatic events, and thoughts and perception also play a role.

Without effective treatment, psychosis can overwhelm the lives of individuals and families. It can be very disorienting and distressing for the person experiencing it. Without effective treatment, psychosis can overwhelm the lives of individuals and families.

What are the signs and symptoms of psychosis?

- **Emotions and feelings**
  - The person with psychosis may:
    - Be confused or puzzled.
    - Feel that he/she is unable to trust anyone.
    - Feel that he/she is being constantly watched.

- **Thoughts and perception**
  - The person with psychosis may:
    - Hear voices.
    - Think that others are against him/her or talking about him/her.
    - Think that he/she has special powers.

What causes psychosis?

- **Biological factors**
- **Alcohol or drug abuse** (especially cannabis)
- **Stressful or traumatic events**

What is psychosis?

Psychosis is a mental health condition affecting thinking and perception and the person’s sense of reality. Symptoms usually start in late adolescence or early adulthood.

Without effective treatment, psychosis can overwhelm the lives of individuals and families.

Effective treatment is available; seek help early. Let us help you know what you can do.

- **Are you noticing changes in someone’s behavior?**
  - Are they neglecting themselves and their usual activities?
  - Are they preoccupied by ideas that seem very strange to you?
  - Do they seem confused or puzzled?
  - Are they behaving aggressively?
  - Are they communicating with people who aren’t there?
  - Are they talking to themselves?
  - Are they avoiding people?
  - Are they showing up late or not showing up at all?

- **Are you noticing changes in someone’s appearance?**
  - Are they neglecting their personal care?
  - Are they wearing inappropriate clothing?

- **Are you noticing changes in someone’s emotions?**
  - Are they very sad or very happy?
  - Are they very angry or very calm?

- **Are you noticing changes in someone’s behavior?**
  - Are they behaving aggressively?
  - Are they avoiding people?
  - Are they talking to themselves?

- **Are you noticing changes in someone’s thinking?**
  - Are they thinking that others are against them?
  - Are they thinking that they have special powers?
What are the benefits of visiting a healthcare provider?

The healthcare provider can:
- help you identify warning signs early (such as severe weight loss, lack of improvement in psychotic symptoms, suicidal thoughts).
- help you find the best treatment option for you.
- screen for other medical conditions you may have.
- prevent the condition from getting worse.
- provide psychosocial support.
- refer you to mental health specialists who can help you further, if needed.

Advice for the person with psychosis:

» Maintain a healthy lifestyle:
  - eat a balanced diet.
  - maintain a regular sleep cycle.
  - walk 45 minutes at least 3 times a week.
  - maintain your personal hygiene (bathing, grooming, changing clothes, etc.).
  - avoid alcohol, substance use, and other non-prescription drugs.

» Continue regular social, educational and work activities.

» Stick to the treatment plan advised by your healthcare professional.

» Return for regular check-ups.

Do’s and Don’ts for the caregivers of people with psychosis:

Do’s:
- Encourage the person to see a healthcare professional.
- Be understanding and supportive.
- Keep the person living at home and include him/her in family activities.
- Give the person freedom of movement.
- Ensure that the person is safe and is treated with dignity and respect.

Don’ts:
- Do not be hostile towards the person with psychosis, it worsens their condition.
- Do not try to convince the person that his/her beliefs are not real.
- Do not have the person hospitalized for a long time.
- Do not restrain the person.
- Do not discriminate against or stigmatize the person.

Questions:
 If you have any questions, write them down in order to discuss them with your health care provider during your next visit:

How is psychosis treated?

Psychosocial support such as rehabilitation and family education
Psychotropical treatment: Drugs that have proven to be effective such as Antipsychotics
Psychotherapy: Talk therapies that have proven to be effective such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)
Medication: after consulting with your doctor

Treatment is most effective when it is started early. With proper treatment, most people recover fully from the first episode of psychosis.

A healthcare provider can help the person with psychosis find the most appropriate treatment plan for them and return to his/her usual daily activities faster.