



SA Federation for  
Mental Health

# SCHIZOPHRENIA SPECTRUM AND OTHER PSYCHOTIC DISORDERS

## BRIEF PSYCHOTIC DISORDER

### What it is:

Brief psychotic disorder is a sudden, short-term display of psychotic behaviour, such as hallucinations or delusions. A psychotic episode lasts for a short period of time, and afterwards the individual returns to the same level of functionality as before the episode. Individuals experiencing brief psychotic disorder may feel overwhelming confusion during and after a psychotic episode, and supervision may be needed to ensure safety and adequate self-care during an acute episode.

There are three different possible types of brief psychotic disorder:

1. Brief psychotic disorder with a marked stressor(s) - When a psychotic episode is triggered by an emotionally stressful event or events in an individual's life
2. Brief psychotic disorder without a marked stressor(s) - When a psychotic episode occurs without any stressful event acting as a trigger
3. Brief psychotic disorder with postpartum onset - When a psychotic episode occurs during pregnancy or within the 4 weeks postpartum

### Common symptoms:

1. Delusions
2. Hallucinations
3. Disorganised speech
4. Grossly disorganised or catatonic behaviour
5. Psychotic episode must last for at least one day, but less than one month
6. After the episode the individual returns to the same functional state as before



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### **Causes:**

One likely cause for brief psychotic disorder seems to be pre-existing personality disorders and character traits. For example, an individual with schizotypal personality disorder or borderline personality disorder, may be more likely to develop this disorder. Stress and/or a traumatic life event, such as the loss of a loved one or a physical attack, may also cause brief psychotic disorder.