

# Schizophrenia In Women

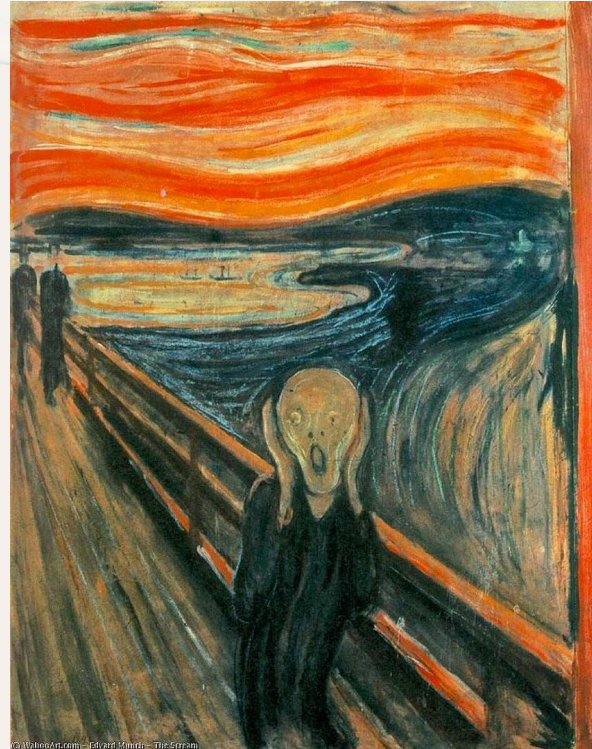
Cause For A New Approach to Diagnosis,  
Treatment and Accommodations

Erin White



# What Is Schizophrenia?

A psychological disorder that affects the way a patient, thinks, acts and functions.





# Symptoms of Schizophrenia

Positive Symptoms

Negative Symptoms

Psychomotor Symptoms

# Shared Delusions

When two or more people share the same delusion or hallucination.







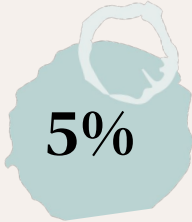
# Major Differences Between Schizophrenia in Men and Women

Age of Onset

Social Adjustment

Suicide Rates

# Pregnancy and Childbirth in Schizophrenic Women



**5%**

Lose custody of  
their children  
following  
psychosis events.



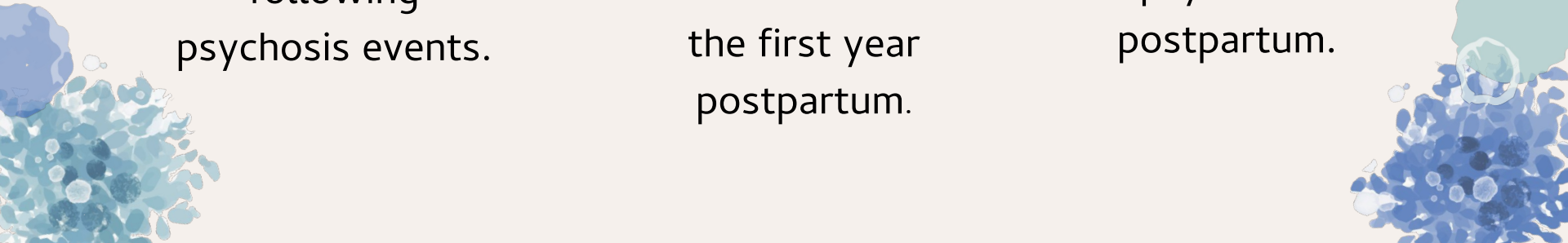

**1 in 5**

Have a psychiatric  
inpatient hospital  
admission within  
the first year  
postpartum.



**43%**

Are involuntarily  
admitted for  
psychosis  
postpartum.





# Potential Causes and Risk Factors

## Heritability Rates

Heritability rates are estimated at **64%** in pedigree studies, and **81%** in twin studies.



# Potential Causes and Risk Factors

## Reproductive Hormones

Age of Puberty Onset

Prenatal Environment



# Potential Causes and Risk Factors

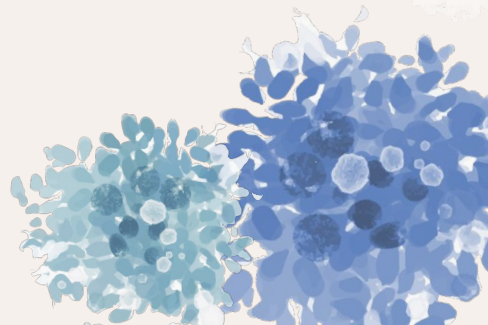
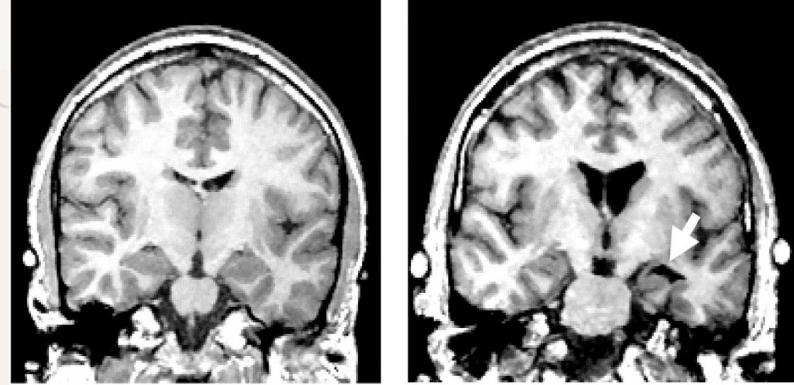
## Brain Anatomy Changes

Ventricular enlargement by roughly 25%

Overall reduction in brain volume by 2%.

Mainly a loss of **white matter**, and primarily within the **frontal lobe**.

The Theory of **Hypofrontality**


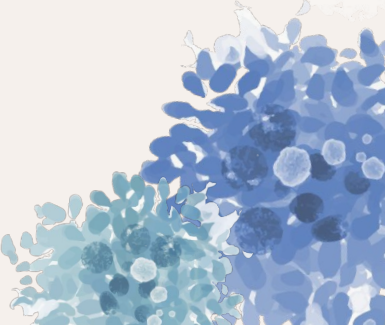




# Potential Causes and Risk Factors

## Schizophrenogenic Mothers

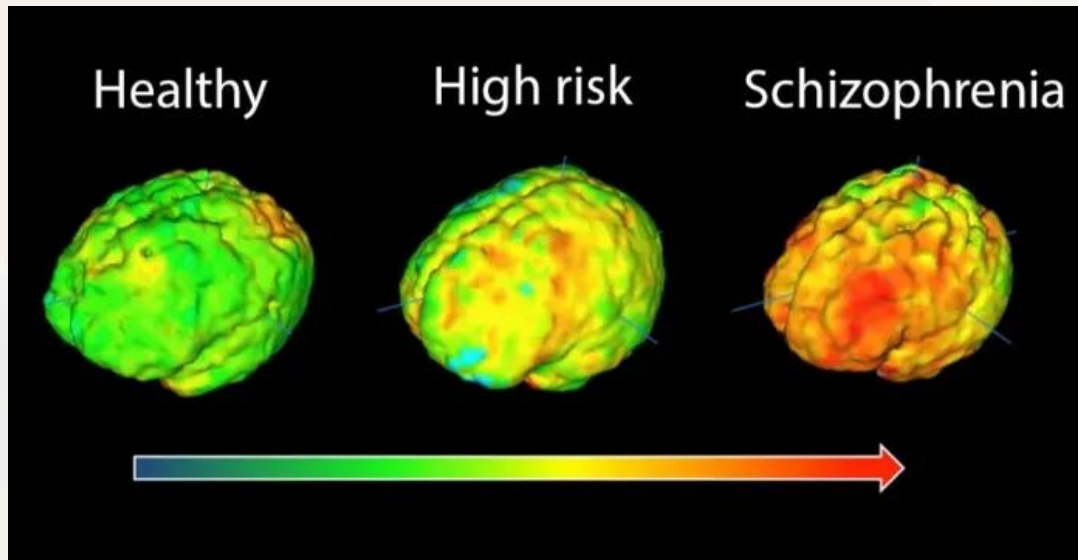
Characterized by being; **cold, domineering and uninterested in the needs of her children.**



# Potential Causes and Risk Factors

## Viral Infection

Significant increase in the presence of **microglia** in the scans of those suffering from schizophrenia.







# Potential Causes and Risk Factors

## Neurotransmitters

**Dopamine:** specialized in motor function, learning and reward prediction as well as the “error” signal

**Glutamate:** Main excitatory transmitter in the brain.





# Treatment Differences in Men and Women

Antipsychotic Drugs

Add-On Estrogen  
Treatments



# Differences in Antipsychotic Medicinal Effectiveness



**Clozapine**



**Olanzapine**



**Risperidone**

# Andrea Yates

**June 20th, 2001**

Andrea Yates called 911 to report that she had drowned her 5 children, saying “they weren’t developing” and she “realized she hadn’t been a good mother to them”.





# The Stigma Surrounding Women in Developing Countries

Of 75 schizophrenic women, 95% reported hiding their diagnosis from their spouse.

## Turkey

Many people reported no desire to be near to, neighbors with or married to anyone with schizophrenia.

## China

72-84% of family members of women with schizophrenia reported a stigma and **28%** reported moving to avoid it.

## Nigeria

**61%** of women with a severe mental illness were kept at a “social distance”.



# Intimate Partner Violence in Women with Schizophrenia in Developing Countries

As reported in a study of 79 schizophrenic women in South-South Nigeria

**73%**

Reported at least one form of intimate partner violence.

**40%**

Experience IPV in developing countries.

**30%**

Difference between IPV in women with schizophrenia and without

**24%**

Reported sexual assault.

**71%**

Reported verbal abuse.

**51%**

Reported physical abuse.



## **Sexual Assault in Female Psychiatric Patients**

**21-43%** Prevalence rate of sexual assault in  
female psychiatric patients.

Among 146 females, **30%** reported coercion.





# Key Takeaways

Schizophrenia in women differs greatly in all aspects from schizophrenia in men.

Gender based research is desperately needed.

Outreach programs are needed for women with mental illnesses in developing countries.

Education and outreach programs are necessary worldwide to decrease the stigma that surrounds schizophrenia and other mental illnesses and protect those diagnosed.

# Sources

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