

Phases of Psychosis



Psychosis doesn't always happen all at once—
it often unfolds in three phases

1 Prodromal Phase

Before psychosis starts, people often experience small changes in how they feel, think, or act.

This period is referred to as the prodromal phase, or prodrome.

The changes that occur in this stage will vary from person to person. How long the prodromal phase lasts will also vary from person to person.

Some common changes in the prodromal phase include:

- Feeling sad, anxious or irritable
- Being suspicious of others
- Changes in sleeping patterns
- Wanting to be alone
- Difficulties concentrating
- Lack of energy

2 Acute Phase

It is in the acute phase that symptoms of psychosis begin. For example, a person may experience unusual beliefs or delusions, hallucinations such as hearing or seeing things that aren't there, and severe problems with thinking and motivation.

3 Recovery Phase

With the right treatment, most people start to feel better after the first episode of psychosis.

Recovery looks different for everyone—some people may never have psychosis come back, while others might experience symptoms returning after getting better (also called a relapse).

The good news is, there are ways to lower the chances of relapse.

Reduce the Risk of Relapse

Getting treatment can support recovery and lower the chance of relapse.

Along with medication, learning skills to manage psychosis is an important part of treatment.

Tips to lower risk:

- Take medication as prescribed
- Learn skills to manage stress
- Get your family involved in your treatment
- Have a 'relapse prevention plan' in place
- Avoid substance use