Brief Psychotic Disorder

Diagnostic Criteria 298.8 (F23)

A. Presence of one (or more) of the following symptoms. At least one of these must be (1), (2), or (3):
   1. Delusions.
   2. Hallucinations.
   3. Disorganized speech (e.g., frequent derailment or incoherence).
   4. Grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior.

   Note: Do not include a symptom if it is a culturally sanctioned response.

B. Duration of an episode of the disturbance is at least 1 day but less than 1 month, with eventual full return to premorbid level of functioning.

C. The disturbance is not better explained by major depressive or bipolar disorder with psychotic features or another psychotic disorder such as schizophrenia or catatonia, and is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or another medical condition.

Specify if:

With marked stressor(s) (brief reactive psychosis): If symptoms occur in response to events that, singly or together, would be markedly stressful to almost anyone in similar circumstances in the individual's culture.

Without marked stressor(s): If symptoms do not occur in response to events that, singly or together, would be markedly stressful to almost anyone in similar circumstances in the individual's culture.

With postpartum onset: If onset is during pregnancy or within 4 weeks postpartum.

Specify if:

With catatonia (refer to the criteria for catatonia associated with another mental disorder, pp. 119–120, for definition)

Coding note: Use additional code 293.89 (F06.1) catatonia associated with brief psychotic disorder to indicate the presence of the comorbid catatonia.

Specify current severity:

Severity is rated by a quantitative assessment of the primary symptoms of psychosis, including delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, abnormal psychomotor behavior, and negative symptoms. Each of these symptoms may be rated for its current severity (most severe in the last 7 days) on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (not present) to 4 (present and severe). (See Clinician-Rated Dimensions of Psychosis Symptom Severity in the chapter "Assessment Measures.")

Note: Diagnosis of brief psychotic disorder can be made without using this severity specifier.

Diagnostic Features

The essential feature of brief psychotic disorder is a disturbance that involves the sudden onset of at least one of the following positive psychotic symptoms: delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech (e.g., frequent derailment or incoherence), or grossly abnormal psychomotor behavior, including catatonia (Criterion A). *Sudden onset* is defined as change from a nonpsychotic state to a clearly psychotic state within 2 weeks, usually without a prodrome. An episode of the disturbance lasts at least 1 day but less than 1 month, and the individual eventually has a full return to the premorbid level of functioning (Cri-

terion B). The disturbance is not better explained by a depressive or bipolar disorder with psychotic features, by schizoaffective disorder, or by schizophrenia and is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a hallucinogen) or another medical condition (e.g., subdural hematoma) (Criterion C).

In addition to the five symptom domain areas identified in the diagnostic criteria, the assessment of cognition, depression, and mania symptom domains is vital for making critically important distinctions between the various schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorders.

Associated Features Supporting Diagnosis

Individuals with brief psychotic disorder typically experience emotional turmoil or overwhelming confusion. They may have rapid shifts from one intense affect to another. Although the disturbance is brief, the level of impairment may be severe, and supervision may be required to ensure that nutritional and hygienic needs are met and that the individual is protected from the consequences of poor judgment, cognitive impairment, or acting on the basis of delusions. There appears to be an increased risk of suicidal behavior, particularly during the acute episode.

Prevaience

In the United States, brief psychotic disorder may account for 9% of cases of first-onset psychosis. Psychotic disturbances that meet Criteria A and C, but not Criterion B, for brief psychotic disorder (i.e., duration of active symptoms is 1–6 months as opposed to remission within 1 month) are more common in developing countries than in developed countries. Brief psychotic disorder is twofold more common in females than in males.

Deveiopment and Course

Brief psychotic disorder may appear in adolescence or early adulthood, and onset can occur across the lifespan, with the average age at onset being the mid 30s. By definition, a diagnosis of brief psychotic disorder requires a full remission of all symptoms and an eventual full return to the premorbid level of functioning within 1 month of the onset of the disturbance. In some individuals, the duration of psychotic symptoms may be quite brief (e.g., a few days).

Risk and Prognostic Factors

Temperamental. Preexisting personality disorders and traits (e.g., schizotypal personality disorder; borderline personality disorder; or traits in the psychoticism domain, such as perceptual dysregulation, and the negative affectivity domain, such as suspiciousness) may predispose the individual to the development of the disorder.

Culture-Reiated Diagnostic Issues

It is important to distinguish symptoms of brief psychotic disorder from culturally sanctioned response patterns. For example, in some religious ceremonies, an individual may report hearing voices, but these do not generally persist and are not perceived as abnormal by most members of the individual's community. In addition, cultural and religious background must be taken into account when considering whether beliefs are delusional.

Functionai Consequences of Brief Psychotic Disorder

Despite high rates of relapse, for most individuals, outcome is excellent in terms of social functioning and symptomatology.

Differential Diagnosis

Other medical conditions. A variety of medical disorders can manifest with psychotic symptoms of short duration. Psychotic disorder due to another medical condition or a delirium is diagnosed when there is evidence from the history, physical examination, or laboratory tests that the delusions or hallucinations are the direct physiological consequence of a specific medical condition (e.g., Cushing's syndrome, brain tumor) (see "Psychotic Disorder Due to Another Medical Condition" later in this chapter).

Substance-related disorders. Substance/medication-induced psychotic disorder, substance-induced delirium, and substance intoxication are distinguished from brief psychotic disorder by the fact that a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication, exposure to a toxin) is judged to be etiologically related to the psychotic symptoms (see "Substance/Medication-Induced Psychotic Disorder" later in this chapter). Laboratory tests, such as a urine drug screen or a blood alcohol level, may be helpful in making this determination, as may a careful history of substance use with attention to temporal relationships between substance intake and onset of the symptoms and to the nature of the substance being used.

Depressive and bipolar disorders. The diagnosis of brief psychotic disorder cannot be made if the psychotic symptoms are better explained by a mood episode (i.e., the psychotic symptoms occur exclusively during a full major depressive, manic, or mixed episode).

Other psychotic disorders. If the psychotic symptoms persist for 1 month or longer, the diagnosis is either schizophreniform disorder, delusional disorder, depressive disorder with psychotic features, bipolar disorder with psychotic features, or other specified or unspecified schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorder, depending on the other symptoms in the presentation. The differential diagnosis between brief psychotic disorder and schizophreniform disorder is difficult when the psychotic symptoms have remitted before 1 month in response to successful treatment with medication. Careful attention should be given to the possibility that a recurrent disorder (e.g., bipolar disorder, recurrent acute exacerbations of schizophrenia) may be responsible for any recurring psychotic episodes.

Malingering and factitious disorders. An episode of factitious disorder, with predominantly psychological signs and symptoms, may have the appearance of brief psychotic disorder, but in such cases there is evidence that the symptoms are intentionally produced. When malingering involves apparently psychotic symptoms, there is usually evidence that the illness is being feigned for an understandable goal.

Personality disorders. In certain individuals with personality disorders, psychosocial stressors may precipitate brief periods of psychotic symptoms. These symptoms are usually transient and do not warrant a separate diagnosis. If psychotic symptoms persist for at least 1 day, an additional diagnosis of brief psychotic disorder may be appropriate.

Schizophreniform Disorder

Diagnostic Criteria **295.40 (F20.81)**

A. Two (or more) of the following, each present for a significant portion of time during a 1-month period (or less if successfully treated). At least one of these must be (1), (2), or (3):

1. Delusions.
2. Hallucinations.
3. Disorganized speech (e.g., frequent derailment or incoherence).
4. Grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior.
5. Negative symptoms (i.e., diminished emotional expression or avolition).

B. An episode of the disorder lasts at least 1 month but less than 6 months. When the diagnosis must be made without waiting for recovery, it should be qualified as "provisional."
C. Schizoaffective disorder and depressive or bipolar disorder with psychotic features have been ruled out because either 1) no major depressive or manic episodes have occurred concurrently with the active-phase symptoms, or 2) if mood episodes have occurred during active-phase symptoms, they have been present for a minority of the total duration of the active and residual periods of the illness.
D. The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or another medical condition.

Specify if:

With good prognostic features: This specifier requires the presence of at least two of the following features: onset of prominent psychotic symptoms within 4 weeks of the first noticeable change in usual behavior or functioning; confusion or perplexity; good premorbid social and occupational functioning; and absence of blunted or flat affect.

Without good prognostic features: This specifier is applied if two or more of the above features have not been present.

Specify if:

With catatonia (refer to the criteria for catatonia associated with another mental disorder, pp. 119–120, for definition).

Coding note: Use additional code 293.89 (F06.1) catatonia associated with schizophreniform disorder to indicate the presence of the comorbid catatonia.

Specify current severity:

Severity is rated by a quantitative assessment of the primary symptoms of psychosis, including delusions, hallucinations, disorganized speech, abnormal psychomotor behavior, and negative symptoms. Each of these symptoms may be rated for its current severity (most severe in the last 7 days) on a 5-point scale ranging from 0 (not present) to 4 (present and severe). (See Clinician-Rated Dimensions of Psychosis Symptom Severity in the chapter "Assessment Measures.")

Note: Diagnosis of schizophreniform disorder can be made without using this severity specifier.

Note: For additional information on Associated Features Supporting Diagnosis, Development and Course (age-related factors), Culture-Related Diagnostic Issues, Gender-Related Diagnostic Issues, Differential Diagnosis, and Comorbidity, see the corresponding sections in schizophrenia.

Diagnostic Features

The characteristic symptoms of schizophreniform disorder are identical to those of schizophrenia (Criterion A). Schizophreniform disorder is distinguished by its difference in duration: the total duration of the illness, including prodromal, active, and residual phases, is at least 1 month but less than 6 months (Criterion B). The duration requirement for schizophreniform disorder is intermediate between that for brief psychotic disorder, which lasts more than 1 day and remits by 1 month, and schizophrenia, which lasts for at least 6 months. The diagnosis of schizophreniform disorder is made under two conditions. 1) when an episode of illness lasts between 1 and 6 months and the individual has already recovered, and 2) when an individual is symptomatic for less than the 6 months' duration required for the diagnosis of schizophrenia but has not yet recovered. In this case, the diagnosis should be noted as "schizophreniform disorder (provisional)" because it is uncertain if the individual will recover from the disturbance within the 6-month period. If the disturbance persists beyond 6 months, the diagnosis should be changed to schizophrenia.

Another distinguishing feature of schizophreniform disorder is the lack of a criterion requiring impaired social and occupational functioning. While such impairments may potentially be present, they are not necessary for a diagnosis of schizophreniform disorder.

In addition to the five symptom domain areas identified in the diagnostic criteria, the assessment of cognition, depression, and mania symptom domains is vital for making critically important distinctions between the various schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorders.

Associated Features Supporting Diagnosis

As with schizophrenia, currently there are no laboratory or psychometric tests for schizophreniform disorder. There are multiple brain regions where neuroimaging, neuropathological, and neurophysiological research has indicated abnormalities, but none are diagnostic.

Prevalence

Incidence of schizophreniform disorder across sociocultural settings is likely similar to that observed in schizophrenia. In the United States and other developed countries, the incidence is low, possibly fivefold less than that of schizophrenia. In developing countries, the incidence may be higher, especially for the specifier "with good prognostic features"; in some of these settings schizophreniform disorder may be as common as schizophrenia.

Development and Course

The development of schizophreniform disorder is similar to that of schizophrenia. About one-third of individuals with an initial diagnosis of schizophreniform disorder (provisional) recover within the 6-month period and schizophreniform disorder is their final diagnosis. The majority of the remaining two-thirds of individuals will eventually receive a diagnosis of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder.

Risk and Prognostic Factors

Genetic and physiological. Relatives of individuals with schizophreniform disorder have an increased risk for schizophrenia.

Functional Consequences of Schizophreniform Disorder

For the majority of individuals with schizophreniform disorder who eventually receive a diagnosis of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder, the functional consequences are similar to the consequences of those disorders. Most individuals experience dysfunction in several areas of daily functioning, such as school or work, interpersonal relationships, and self-care. Individuals who recover from schizophreniform disorder have better functional outcomes.

Differential Diagnosis

Other mental disorders and medical conditions. A wide variety of mental and medical conditions can manifest with psychotic symptoms that must be considered in the differential diagnosis of schizophreniform disorder. These include psychotic disorder due to another medical condition or its treatment; delirium or major neurocognitive disorder; substance/medication-induced psychotic disorder or delirium; depressive or bipolar disorder with psychotic features; schizoaffective disorder; other specified or unspecified bipolar and related disorder; depressive or bipolar disorder with catatonic features; schizophre-

nia; brief psychotic disorder; delusional disorder; other specified or unspecified schizophrenia spectrum and other psychotic disorder; schizotypal, schizoid, or paranoid personality disorders; autism spectrum disorder; disorders presenting in childhood with disorganized speech; attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder; obsessive-compulsive disorder; posttraumatic stress disorder; and traumatic brain injury.

Since the diagnostic criteria for schizophreniform disorder and schizophrenia differ primarily in duration of illness, the discussion of the differential diagnosis of schizophrenia also applies to schizophreniform disorder.

Brief psychotic disorder. Schizophreniform disorder differs in duration from brief psychotic disorder, which has a duration of less than 1 month.

Schizophrenia

Diagnostic Criteria **295.90 (F20.9)**

A. Two (or more) of the following, each present for a significant portion of time during a 1-month period (or less if successfully treated). At least one of these must be (1), (2), or (3):
   1. Delusions.
   2. Hallucinations.
   3. Disorganized speech (e.g., frequent derailment or incoherence).
   4. Grossly disorganized or catatonic behavior.
   5. Negative symptoms (i.e., diminished emotional expression or avolition).

B. For a significant portion of the time since the onset of the disturbance, level of functioning in one or more major areas, such as work, interpersonal relations, or self-care, is markedly below the level achieved prior to the onset (or when the onset is in childhood or adolescence, there is failure to achieve expected level of interpersonal, academic, or occupational functioning).

C. Continuous signs of the disturbance persist for at least 6 months. This 6-month period must include at least 1 month of symptoms (or less if successfully treated) that meet Criterion A (i.e., active-phase symptoms) and may include periods of prodromal or residual symptoms. During these prodromal or residual periods, the signs of the disturbance may be manifested by only negative symptoms or by two or more symptoms listed in Criterion A present in an attenuated form (e.g., odd beliefs, unusual perceptual experiences).

D. Schizoaffective disorder and depressive or bipolar disorder with psychotic features have been ruled out because either 1) no major depressive or manic episodes have occurred concurrently with the active-phase symptoms, or 2) if mood episodes have occurred during active-phase symptoms, they have been present for a minority of the total duration of the active and residual periods of the illness.

E. The disturbance is not attributable to the physiological effects of a substance (e.g., a drug of abuse, a medication) or another medical condition.

F. If there is a history of autism spectrum disorder or a communication disorder of childhood onset, the additional diagnosis of schizophrenia is made only if prominent delusions or hallucinations, in addition to the other required symptoms of schizophrenia, are also present for at least 1 month (or less if successfully treated).

Specify if:

The following course specifiers are only to be used after a 1-year duration of the disorder and if they are not in contradiction to the diagnostic course criteria.

First episode, currently in acute episode: First manifestation of the disorder meeting the defining diagnostic symptom and time criteria. An *acute episode* is a time period in which the symptom criteria are fulfilled.