

# Early detection of schizophrenia

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Detecting and treating schizophrenia early, perhaps even before symptoms arise, could lead to better therapeutic outcomes. Studies have demonstrated differences in social function and cognition among people who later develop symptoms of schizophrenia, but less is known about pre-morbid temperament and personality.

Jennifer Blackford, Ph.D., Brandee Feola, Ph.D., and colleagues studied

inhibited temperament—a tendency to respond to novelty with wariness, fear or caution—in patients with schizophrenia compared to healthy controls.

Using self-reported measures of childhood inhibited temperament, clinical symptoms and [quality of life](#), they found that patients had higher levels of inhibited temperament compared to controls. Inhibited temperament was associated with mood and anxiety symptoms and lower quality of life, but it was not associated with psychosis symptoms.

The investigators report in *Psychiatry Research* that inhibited temperament may be a pre-morbid risk factor for schizophrenia that could be targeted for preventative interventions. They also suggest that patients with schizophrenia and inhibited temperament may benefit from adjunctive treatments for anxiety and depression.

**More information:** Brandee Feola et al. Childhood temperament is associated with distress, anxiety and reduced quality of life in schizophrenia spectrum disorders, *Psychiatry Research* (2019). [DOI: 10.1016/j.psychres.2019.03.016](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psychres.2019.03.016)

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