

Review

Schizophrenia for Dummies

Jerome Levine & Irene S. Levine
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There is a lack of publications about schizophrenia aimed at the general public. *Schizophrenia for Dummies* fills this gap by providing an easy-to-digest overview of some of the essential information required by patients and their families. It is well organised into five subsections with a cartoon at the beginning of each. The authors have used icons for easy navigation, for example a 'remember icon' to highlight information that is worth remembering. Even though the book appears long, I strongly suggest that readers persist with this straightforward read that contains no jargon, apart from sections marked with a 'technical stuff' icon.

The book begins with an overview of schizophrenia, explaining its symptoms, causes, risk factors and approaches to treatment, including an overview of multidisciplinary teams. I would advise UK readers to be cautious in relation to chapters on diagnosis and service delivery models as this book is an American publication. Chapters on treatment of schizophrenia

and living with schizophrenia are the most commendable sections. Here, the authors explain the most complex mechanisms of action of antipsychotic medication in simple terms. They have clearly explained methods of coping with the side-effects of drugs, in addition to providing a summary of the most valuable psychosocial approaches in schizophrenia. The book is filled with practical tips for families, including advice on handling a person's challenging and troublesome behaviour, improving communication skills, reducing personal stress, and helping to avoid relapse.

The authors conclude by attempting to dispel the myths associated with schizophrenia in addition to offering extra tips on relapse prevention and avoiding burnout. The book ends with a list of useful resources. Slight modifications to suit UK readers would make this book an excellent read for both patients and their families.

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