

# Etiology of mental disorders

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## Etiology of mental disorders: In general

- Generally mental disorders are multifactorial in etiology, much remains to be discovered about them
- Predisposing factors x precipitating factors x maintaining factors

## Examples

- Schizophrenia: Genetic factors (concordance rate of 400-500% in monozygotic twins), environmental factors (frequent use of cannabis during early teens, stress and psychosocial factors)
  - → **dysregulation of neurotransmitters** (dopamine increase and decrease (mesolimbic, prefrontal pathways), serotonergic activity, glutamergic neurotransmission, ), structural and functional changes (**synaptogenesis** (decreased dendritic branching), **enlarged ventricles**, decreased volume of hippocampi and amygdala)
- Anxiety disorders: gender, neurobiological factors (serotonin system disruption, environmental factors (smoking, stress, trauma), secondary anxiety due to other medical conditions or drugs)
- Bipolar disorder: strong **genetic** component, **paternal age** (mutations during spermatogenesis), "triggers" (psychosocial stress, sleep disturbances, traumatic experiences), calcium and mitochondrial dysfunction (?)
- PTSD: **primarily related to triggers** (sexual abuse, physical abuse, accidents, war...) + risk factors (age, social support, mental comorbidities, prior comorbidities)