

# HALLUCINATIONS VS DELUSIONS



**Hallucinations** are alterations in sensory perceptions without any external stimuli.  
E.g., seeing snakes on the floor.



**Delusions** are faulty fixed beliefs that contradict reality and have no truth. E.g., mistaking an IV tubing for a snake.

## Common types of hallucinations

### **Auditory hallucinations:**

- Hearing things that are not there, e.g., a voice or radio
- Auditory hallucinations can give commands, e.g., to harm oneself or others

### **Visual hallucinations:**

seeing things that are not present, e.g., another person, animal, or object

### **Olfactory hallucinations:**

smelling things that are not present, e.g., fish or trash

### **Gustatory hallucinations:**

eating something and thinking it's something different (e.g., eating cheese, but thinking it's an apple)

### **Tactile hallucinations:**

sensations that feel like being touched by something or someone

### **Somatic hallucinations:**

can affect the entire body, causing unreal sensations, e.g., the perception of worms in the skin

## Common types of delusions

### **Thought broadcasting:**

thinking that thoughts can be heard by others

### **Ideas/delusions of reference:**

misconstruing events and giving these events a personal meaning

### **Grandeur delusions:**

feeling powerful and important in an elevated way

### **Outside control delusions:**

thinking that an external concept is taking control of the mind

### **Persecution delusions:**

- Feeling singled out for harm by others
- Feeling plotted against by people

### **Somatic delusions:**

a false set of beliefs about the body, e.g., it's decomposing

Both hallucinations and delusions can be observed in people who have mental health conditions, including substance abuse or withdrawal, and medical conditions (senile dementias, Parkinson's disease, adverse reactions to narcotic pain medications or new medications).

## NOTES

