

# Bipolar Disorder

**What is it?** Bipolar disorder, previously known as "manic depression," is a mental illness that causes extreme mood swings. One of the causes of bipolar disorder is a chemical imbalance in the brain. Bipolar disorder is sometimes inherited among family members. If one of your parents have bipolar disorder, the probability of you having it is greater. Psychosocial factors such as trauma, unexpected life changes, abuse and abandonment can accelerate the onset of symptoms. Both men and women of any age can suffer from bipolar disorder. There are different types of bipolar disorder:

- **Mania and hypomania:** A manic episode consist of an emotional disturbance characterized by periods of excessive exaltation or euphoria known as mania. During a manic phase there is an excessive energy, humor, or enthusiasm, which can very often be accompanied by excitement, delusions of grandeur or uninhibited behavior. When these abnormally euphoric episodes do not interfere with a person's daily life, they are considered hypomania.
- **Depression:** A depressive episode can cause difficulties in daily activities, such as work, school, social activities or relationships. The main symptom is feeling very sad without any reason. The person may not want to do anything when they feel this way.

People with bipolar disorder can move from one episode to another quickly, for example; from mania to depression and then mania again.

## Signs of mania

Possible mania signs:

- Feeling anxious or upset.
- Think or speak quickly; so fast that people don't understand what you are trying to express.
- Lack of sleep.
- Difficulty to concentrate.
- Spend too much money.
- Drug and/or alcohol abuse.
- Having unprotected sexual intercourse, exposing to pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted diseases.

- Difficulty to remember things or to concentrate.
- Physical health problems
- Feeling tired all the time.
- Having suicidal ideas or thoughts.

## Signs of depression

Possible depression signs:

- Feeling sad or indifferent.
- Lack of interest in things you do.
- Feeling down, restless, or irritable.
- Feeling worthless or guilty.
- Changes in eating habits.

## Recommendations

If someone important to you has been diagnosed with Bipolar disorder, know that he is not alone and there are many ways in which you can help with the treatment.

- Learn everything you can about the condition.
- Attend all your medical appointments even if you feel better.
- Avoid caffeine and over-the-counter medicines to treat colds, allergies, and pain.
- Ask your doctor before using alcohol or any other medication.
- Identify early symptoms of your condition. Contact your doctor if you notice any change in humor or

behavior.

- Maintain a regular routine. For example, go to sleep and wakeup at a similar time every day, eat, and exercise.
- Take your medication as recommended by your doctor.
- Ask for help if you have suicidal ideas or thoughts:
- Call Line PAS 1-800-981-0023 or 1-888-672-7622 TDD twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days of the week.

### **What is the treatment for bipolar disorder?**

At the moment, there is no cure for bipolar disorder. There are different treatments that can help control the symptoms. These are:

- Medication- such as mood stabilizers and antidepressants to decrease the symptoms of the condition.
- Psychological therapy- may help you change behaviors and improve your relationship with family and friends.

### **Remember**

- Bipolar disorder, previously known as "manic depression," is a mental illness that causes extreme mood swings.
- People with bipolar disorder can move from one episode to another quickly, for example; from mania to depression and then mania again.
- Is important to take your medication as recommended by your doctor.
- Ask for help if you have suicidal ideas or thoughts:
- Call Line PAS 1-800-981-002 or 1-888-672-7622 TDD twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days of the week.

### **Contact your doctor**

It is possible that with this type of diagnosis your quality of life gets altered.

Contact your doctor for more information or advice on how you and your family can address physical and emotional concerns about bipolar disorder.

If you are diagnosed with bipolar disorder, you could benefit from High Cost-High Needs Program. Through this Program, you may receive all the care you need to meet your health care needs.

Talking to your health service provider about your needs will help you understand the best way to assist you in managing your health condition. Your doctor and/or your specialist can provide information about the benefits of this Program.

### **Important**

If you need physical or mental health emergency services, you can dial 9-1-1, or visit the nearest Emergency Room.

If you have any symptoms that you understand require immediate attention, before visiting an Emergency Room, you can contact the Medical Advice Line toll-free at 1-844-347-7801, twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7 ) days of the week. TTY / TDD users should call 1-844-347-7804. By calling the Medical Advice Line before visiting an Emergency Room, you will be exempt from paying the copayment for services received during your visit.

### **For additional information**

Customer Service Department  
1-844-347-7800  
TTY / TDD 1-844-347-7805  
Visit our website  
[www.firstmedicalvital.com](http://www.firstmedicalvital.com)

### **References**

American Psychiatric Association: Desk reference to the Diagnostic Criteria from DMS-5. Arlington, VA, American Psychiatric Association, 2013.  
NIHM (2015)  
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml>  
<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/bipolar-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355955>