

- ✓ Talk with your health care providers about treatment options.
- ✓ Adhere to medication and treatment regimens prescribed by your doctor.
- ✓ Practice self-care by eating healthy, exercising regularly, and getting rest.
- ✓ Be patient with yourself, treatment plans take time.

If you're feeling suicidal, don't hesitate to call 911, or go to an urgent care center or hospital emergency room for immediate assistance.

KEEP IN MIND

You're not alone, and help is available. Consider reaching out to your health care provider and engaging other counseling resources for guidance on next steps.



What is Bipolar Disorder
Mental Health

What is Bipolar Disorder?

Being Bipolar
is more than just
having a good
day followed
by a bad one.

Everyone has ups and downs in life, but some people experience a disorder which disrupts their work, school, and/or relationships. Bipolar disorder is a mental illness that impacts your mood, energy levels, and ability to complete daily tasks.

BIPOLAR CAUSES

There is no single cause for bipolar disorder. Research suggests that genetic components, family history, and a person's environment are all factors.

- **Manic episodes** – These occur when a person is overly excited and full of energy. Common manic episode symptoms are:
 - Talking very quickly and experiencing racing thoughts
 - Being easily distracted
 - Feeling irritable
 - Increasing activities despite a decreased need of sleep
 - Acting impulsively or engaging in high-risk behaviors
 - Believing unrealistic or grandiose ideas about your abilities
- **Depressive episodes** – During a depressive episode, a person feels sad or hopeless. Activities that once brought pleasure are now unappealing. Other depressive episode symptoms are:
 - Lacking energy
 - Having difficulty concentrating
 - Experiencing changes in sleep and eating habits

- Contemplating or attempting suicide

TYPES OF BIPOLAR DISORDER

No one experiences bipolar disorder exactly the same way, but there are two main classifications, Bipolar I and Bipolar II, as identified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (5th ed.; DSM-5; American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

TREATMENT OPTIONS

Bipolar disorder is an absolutely treatable condition. A combination of medication and psychotherapy works well for many coping with the diagnosis.

ACTION STEPS

If you or a loved one is showing signs of bipolar tendencies, know you're not alone. The following tips will help guide you or your loved one toward help.

For a loved one:

- ✓ Be there and offer support in any way you can.
- ✓ Take time to listen and give them your full attention.
- ✓ Encourage them to seek treatment and consider going with them.
- ✓ Observe their behavior and never ignore signs indicating suicidal thoughts.

For yourself:

- ✓ Learn about the warning signs and symptoms of depression and mania.
- ✓ Schedule an appointment for a check-up with your primary care provider.