

# BIPOLAR DISORDER

## Bipolar Disorder is . . .

a lifelong mental health condition that causes extreme shifts in mood, energy, and activity levels.<sup>2</sup>

### The 4 Types of Bipolar Disorder<sup>3</sup>

The 4 basic types all involve obvious mood and energy changes:

1. Bipolar I Disorder: Manic episodes lasting 7 days (causing psychosis), followed by hypomania or depression.
2. Bipolar II Disorder: Hypomanic and depressive episodes, but not manic.
3. Cyclothymic Disorder: At least 2 years with periods of hypomania and depression.
4. Other Specified/Unspecified Disorder: Bipolar Disorder symptoms other than the three mentioned above.

### Available Treatment<sup>3</sup>

A combination of medication and psychotherapy is most effective in treating bipolar disorder. Common medications include antidepressants, antipsychotics, and mood stabilizers. Continuous treatment may help to control symptoms.

### Causes

Although there is no single cause, there are certain factors that can place an individual at a higher risk for the disorder including their genetic make up and family history.<sup>2</sup>

### Symptoms<sup>1</sup>

Individuals with Bipolar Disorder experience episodes between the extremes of manic and depressive states. Symptoms can last days or even longer with frequencies that may vary from person to person.

#### Manic Symptom

- Continuous feeling of being energized, feeling "high," agitated and hyper beyond your normal self.
- Trouble falling and / or staying asleep or strongly decreased need for sleep.

#### Depressive Symptoms

- Intense sadness or despair.
- Thoughts of suicide and / or death.
- Lack of energy and trouble concentrating.
- Feeling "slowed down."

### Diagnosis

In order for proper diagnosis, a certified health professional may perform physical exams, review client's medical history and family history of such conditions, perform psychiatric evaluations (i.e. questionnaires) and / or compare client's information to current standard medical definitions of bipolar disorder.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. (2009, April 23). What Should I Know about Bipolar Disorder (Manic-Depression)? Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/chronic-diseases/mental-illness/what-should-know-about-bipolar-disorder-manic-depression.html>

<sup>2</sup> Bipolar Disorder. (2018, March 5). Psychology Today.

<sup>3</sup> Mayo Clinic. (2018, January 31). Bipolar disorder. Retrieved from <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/bipolar-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355955>