

UNDERSTANDING BIPOLAR DISORDER

BIPOLAR DISORDER AFFECTS A WIDE SPECTRUM OF AREAS, INCLUDING MOOD, ENERGY, ACTIVITY, SLEEP, SPEECH, THINKING, JUDGMENT, AND BEHAVIOR.



WHAT IS BIPOLAR DISORDER?

- Bipolar disorder, also known as manic depression, is a brain disorder that causes extreme shifts in mood, energy, and behavior
- Bipolar disorder is characterized by episodes of “highs” and “lows,” called mania and depression
- It begins early in life (usually in adolescence or early adulthood) and is generally lifelong

SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

FEELINGS

- Feeling sad, blue, or down in the dumps, or losing interest in things you usually enjoy
- Feelings of hopelessness and negativity
- Excessive feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or helplessness, or a feeling of being overwhelmed

THOUGHTS

- Slowed thinking or fewer thoughts than usual
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions

BEHAVIORS

- Decreased energy and activity, fatigue, feeling “slowed down”
- Less talking and slowed speech
- Loss of interest in sex
- Sleeping too much, or sleeping poorly
- Thoughts of death or suicide, suicide plans or attempts

SYMPTOMS OF MANIA

FEELINGS

- Feeling unusually “high” and euphoric, and/or “hyper”; feeling “revved up”
- Extreme irritability or anger
- Exaggerated sense of own importance, power, or greatness

THOUGHTS

- Racing thoughts, rapid thinking, or more thoughts than usual
- Difficulty concentrating, easily distracted

BEHAVIORS

- Increased energy and activity, tendency to make multiple plans for many projects
- Increased talking and rapid speech
- Increased sex drive and activity
- Needing little sleep, sleeping less, disrupted sleep
- Poor judgment, tendency to do impulsive and reckless things without concern for consequences (such as spending too much money, engaging in risky sexual activity, driving recklessly, getting into fights)