

Mental Health: Bipolar Disorder Fact Sheet

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People with bipolar disorder experience unusually intense emotional states that occur in distinct periods called "mood episodes." Each mood episode represents a drastic change from a person's usual mood and behavior. An overly joyful or overexcited state is called a manic episode, and an extremely sad or hopeless state is called a depressive episode. Sometimes, a mood episode includes symptoms of both mania and depression. This is called a mixed state. People with bipolar disorder also may be explosive and irritable during a mood episode.

Extreme changes in energy, activity, sleep, and behavior go along with these changes in mood. Symptoms of bipolar disorder are described below.

Symptoms of mania or a **manic** episode include:

Mood Changes

- A long period of feeling "high," or an overly happy or outgoing mood
- Extreme irritability

Symptoms of depression or a **depressive** episode include:

Mood Changes

- An overly long period of feeling sad or hopeless
- Loss of interest in activities once enjoyed, including sex.

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Symptoms of mania or a
manic episode include:

Behavioral Changes

- Talking very fast, jumping from one idea to another, having racing thoughts
- Being easily distracted
- Increasing activities, such as taking on new projects
- Being overly restless
- Sleeping little or not being tired
- Having an unrealistic belief in one's abilities
- Behaving impulsively and engaging in pleasurable, high-risk behaviors

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Symptoms of depression or a
depressive episode include:

Behavioral Changes


- Feeling tired or "slowed down"
- Having problems concentrating, remembering, and making decisions
- Being restless or irritable
- Changing eating, sleeping, or other habits
- Thinking of death or suicide, or attempting suicide.

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Bipolar disorder can be present even when mood swings are less extreme. For example, some people with bipolar disorder experience hypomania, a less severe form of mania. During a hypomanic episode, you may feel very good, be highly productive, and function well. You may not feel that anything is wrong, but family and friends may recognize the mood swings as possible bipolar disorder. Without proper treatment, people with hypomania may develop severe mania or depression.

Bipolar disorder may also be present in a mixed state, in which you might experience both mania and depression at the same time. During a mixed state, you might feel very agitated, have trouble sleeping, experience major changes in appetite, and have suicidal thoughts. People in a mixed state may feel very sad or hopeless while at the same time feeling extremely energized.



**Only a qualified mental health
professional can diagnose Bipolar
Disorder.**

**Contact me if you have concerns about
your mental health:**

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