

## Bipolar Disorder

Bipolar disorder is defined as a mental illness that causes dramatic shifts in a person's mood, energy and ability to think clearly. People with bipolar experience extreme high and low moods, known as mania and depression. These moods differ from the typical ups-and-downs most people experience.



## Signs & Symptoms

Genetics and environment both are believed to play a role in causing bipolar disorder. Bipolar symptoms can vary in type and severity, with some experiencing distinct manic or depressed states and others may go months or years without any symptoms.

Manic symptoms include:

- Extreme happiness, hopefulness, or excitement
- Increased energy, restlessness
- Poor concentration and judgement
- These symptoms are very severe resulting in hospitalization or incarceration

Depressed symptoms include:

- Feelings of hopelessness, worthlessness, and guilt
- Loss of energy and interest in everyday activities
- Suicidal thoughts and attempts of suicide

## Diagnosis & Treatment

To be diagnosed with bipolar disorder, an individual must have experienced at least one episode of mania or hypomania. Mental health care professionals use the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) to diagnose the specific type of bipolar disorder, which assesses the pattern of symptoms and how impaired the person is during their most severe episodes. Treatment plans include a combination of psychotherapy, medication, self-management strategies like recognition of an episode, and complementary health approaches like exercise and meditation.

**If you or someone you love is experiencing symptoms of bipolar disorder, call us at 1.800.928.8000. We can help.**

Source – National Alliance on Mental Illness: <https://www.nami.org/Learn-More/Mental-Health-Conditions/Bipolar-Disorder>