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BIPOLAR DISORDER (MANIC-DEPRESSION)

DIAN

Qi and Phlegm stagnating

Heart and Spleen deficiency with Phlegm

Qi deficiency with Phlegm

KUANG

Phlegm-Fire harassing upwards

Fire injuring Yin with Phlegm

Qi stagnation, Blood stasis, Phlegm

1. BIPOLAR DISORDER IN WESTERN MEDICINE

Bipolar Disorder, also known as manic-depressive illness, is a serious mental illness that causes shifts in a person's mood, energy, and ability to function.

More than 2 million American adults, or about 1 percent of the population age 18 and older in any given year, have bipolar disorder. Bipolar disorder typically develops in late adolescence or early adulthood.

a) SYMPTOMS OF BIPOLAR DISORDER

Bipolar disorder causes dramatic mood swings—from overly "high" and/or irritable to sad and hopeless, and then back again, often with periods of normal mood in between.

Severe changes in energy and behaviour go along with these changes in mood. The periods of highs and lows are called episodes of mania and depression. Previously called “manic-depression”, this disease is now called “bipolar disorder”.

Signs and symptoms of *mania* (or a *manic episode*) include:

- Elevated and expansive mood (also paranoid or irritable)
- Increased energy, activity and restlessness
- Excessively "high," euphoric mood
- Extreme irritability
- Racing thoughts and talking very fast, jumping from one idea to another
- Distractibility, inability to concentrate
- Extreme impatience
- Little sleep needed
- Rapid, excitable and intrusive speech
- Fast thinking, moving quickly from topic to topic
- Unrealistic beliefs in one's abilities and powers
- Grandiosity
- Chaotic patterns of personal and professional relationships
- Impulsive involvement in questionable endeavours
- Reckless driving, excessive risk-taking

- Certainty of conviction about the correctness and importance of their ideas
- Poor judgment
- Spending sprees
- A lasting period of behaviour that is different from usual
- Intense and impulsive romantic or sexual liaisons
- Increased sexual drive
- Abuse of drugs, particularly cocaine, alcohol, and sleeping medications
- Provocative, intrusive, or aggressive behaviour
- Denial that anything is wrong
- In its extreme forms, violent agitation, bizarre behaviour, delusional thinking, visual and auditory hallucinations.

A manic episode is diagnosed if elevated mood occurs with three or more of the other symptoms most of the day, nearly every day, for 1 week or longer. If the mood is irritable, four additional symptoms must be present.

Signs and symptoms of *depression* (or a *depressive episode*) include:

- Apathy, lethargy
- Lasting sad, anxious, or empty mood
- Slowed physical movement
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities once enjoyed, including sex
- Decreased energy, a feeling of fatigue or of being "slowed down"
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Restlessness or irritability
- Sleeping too much, or insomnia
- Change in appetite and/or unintended weight loss or gain
- Chronic pain or other persistent bodily symptoms that are not caused by physical illness or injury
- Thoughts of death or suicide, or suicide attempts

A depressive episode is diagnosed if five or more of these symptoms last most of the day, nearly every day, for a period of 2 weeks or longer.

A mild to moderate level of mania is called hypomania. Hypomania may feel good to the person who experiences it and may even be associated with good functioning and enhanced productivity.

Thus even when family and friends learn to recognize the mood swings as possible bipolar disorder, the person may deny that anything is wrong. Without proper treatment, however, hypomania can become severe mania in some people or can switch into depression.

Occasionally, severe episodes of mania or depression include symptoms of psychosis (or psychotic symptoms).

Common symptoms are hallucinations (hearing, seeing, or otherwise sensing the presence of things not actually there) and delusions (false, strongly held beliefs not influenced by logical reasoning or explained by a person's usual cultural concepts).

Psychotic symptoms in bipolar disorder tend to reflect the extreme mood state at the time. For example, delusions of grandiosity may occur during mania, such as:

believing one is Jesus Christ

has special powers...

or wealth

During depression people have delusions of guilt or worthlessness such as:

believing that one is ruined and penniless

or has committed some terrible crime.

People with bipolar disorder who have these symptoms are sometimes incorrectly diagnosed as having schizophrenia.



Dr Redfield Jamison lists the following six criteria for the diagnosis of a manic episode:

- A) A distinct period of abnormally and persistently elevated, expansive or irritable mood.
- B) At least three of the following symptoms:
- Inflated self-esteem or grandiosity
 - Decreased need for sleep
 - More talkative than usual
 - Flight of ideas, thoughts racing
 - Distractibility
 - Increase in goal-directed activity (social, work, school, sexual),
psychomotor agitation
 - Excessive involvement in pleasurable activities (buying spree, sexual indiscretions, foolish business investments)

C) Mood disturbance (severe)

D) No delusions or hallucinations

E) Not superimposed on schizophrenia, delusional disorder, psychotic disorder

F) No organic factor.

A) plus B) plus C) constitutes a manic syndrome, while A) plus B) constitutes hypomania.

It may be helpful to think of the various mood states in bipolar disorder as a spectrum or continuous range.

At one end is severe depression, above which is moderate depression and then mild low mood, which many people call "the blues" when it is short-lived but is termed "dysthymia" when it is chronic.

Then there is normal or balanced mood, above which comes hypomania (mild to moderate mania), and then severe mania

Severe mania

Moderate hypomania

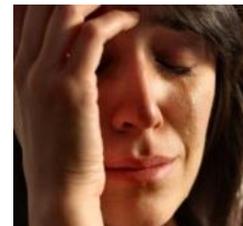
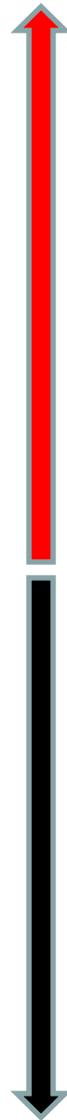
Mild hypomania

Normal mood

Mild low mood (dysthymia)

Moderate depression

Severe depression



In some people, however, symptoms of mania and depression may occur together in what is called a mixed bipolar state. Symptoms of a mixed state often include:

agitation

trouble sleeping

significant change in appetite

psychosis

suicidal thinking

A person may have a very sad, hopeless mood while at the same time feeling extremely energized.