

Bipolar Disorder: Do I Need Help?

Bipolar disorder is marked by fluctuations in mood, thought, energy, behavior, and social functioning.¹

Bipolar disorder is a lifelong mental health condition, but it is manageable with long-term, consistent treatment.²



What are the signs and symptoms of bipolar disorder?³

You may experience symptoms of mania, depression, or a combination of both, which can last several days or weeks.

Symptoms of Mania

- Inflated self-esteem
- Decreased need for sleep
- More talkative than usual or pressure to keep talking
- Flight of ideas or racing thoughts
- Distractibility
- Increase in goal-directed activities (socially, work-related, or sexually) or agitation
- Engaging in risky activities, such as reckless spending or sexual indiscretions

Symptoms of Depressive Episode

- Feeling worthless or inappropriate guilt
- Insomnia or hypersomnia
- Psychomotor agitation or retardation
- Fatigue
- Decreased ability to concentrate or indecisiveness
- Significant weight loss or increased appetite
- Decreased interest or pleasure in all or nearly all activities
- Recurrent thoughts of death



When should you seek help?

When you begin experiencing any of these symptoms, you may be exhibiting early signs that need immediate attention. **Please seek help immediately if you begin to experience thoughts of death or suicide by calling or texting 988.**



What are some treatment options for bipolar disorder?

There are treatment options available for bipolar disorder. You and your provider will work together to decide how best to manage your symptoms. You may receive one or a combination of the following:¹

- Medication management
- Evidence-based psychotherapy
- Other therapies (e.g., brain stimulation, light therapy)

Resources

MILITARY ONESOURCE

Military OneSource provides 24/7 support and information on housing, financial, legal, medical, and psychological services.

- State-side: 800-342-9647
- Overseas: 800-342-9647
- Collect: 484-530-5908

<https://www.militaryonesource.mil>



988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline and the associated **Military/Veterans Crisis Line** provide free and confidential support for individuals in crisis. If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, call or text 988 or <https://988lifeline.org>; you can also press 1 or text 838255 to chat live with a counselor focused on military and veteran callers (<https://www.veteranscrisisline.net>).



inTransition offers specialized coaching and assistance for active duty service members, National Guard members, reservists, veterans, and retirees to help callers with their mental health care as they transition between systems of care.

- State-side: 800-424-7877
- Overseas: 800-748-81111 (in Australia, Germany, Italy, Japan, and South Korea only)

<https://www.health.mil/inTransition>

References

1. Department of Veterans Affairs & Department of Defense. (2023). *VA/DOD clinical practice guideline for management of bipolar disorder*. (Version 2.0). <https://www.healthquality.va.gov/guidelines/MH/bd/index.asp>
2. National Institute of Mental Health. (2022). *Bipolar disorder*. National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. https://www.nimh.nih.gov/sites/default/files/health/publications/bipolar-disorder/bipolar-disorder_0.pdf
3. American Psychiatric Association. (2022). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (5th ed., text rev.). <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425787>



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