

Bipolar Disorder Symptoms

You don't have to struggle with a mental health condition - help is available.

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Signs and symptoms of bipolar disorder

People who suffer from bipolar disorder will have separate manic, hypomanic, mixed or depressive episodes each having their own distinct symptoms. These episodes can be very distressing for the individual and those around them.

COVID-19: Customer Update

We are now resuming face-to-face therapy for existing patients across our network of hospitals and wellbeing centres, as well as continuing to offer this remotely for new patients. Remote therapy, along with consultant assessments, can be accessed via our Priority Connect online therapy service and through Skype.

Outpatient services are still available across our network of private healthcare hospitals, with flexible options for pre-admission assessments being offered.

Bipolar disorder is a volatile condition, characterised by extreme highs and lows in mood. As such, it is important to look out for a pattern of extreme or unexpected behaviour and a strain on personal relationships, if you believe you or someone you know may have the disorder.

Associated symptoms of bipolar disorder you may have include insomnia and extreme tiredness due to an overly active mind and difficulty switching off, while manic episodes and their surges of adrenaline can make you feel as though you require little to no rest at all.

Signs of bipolar disorder

Common signs of bipolar disorder can include:

Mania and bipolar disorder:

- **Elevated mood** - feeling very happy and excited for a sustained period of time
- **Irritability** over small things and focusing on these small issues over a prolonged period of time
- **Increased self-confidence** due to surges in happiness
- **More talkative nature** although some sentences may not make sense
- **Becoming easily distracted**
- **Having poor judgement** when faced with decision making
- **Reduced need for sleep**
- **Excessive shopping or gambling**

Depression and bipolar disorder:

- **Decrease in self-confidence** due to the nature of depression and the extreme emotions associated with it
- **Inability to make decisions** because of worry and underlying anxiety
- **Altered sleep patterns**
- **Negative thoughts about life**
- **Lack of interest in friends and family** can lead to social isolation and can heighten depression
- **Suicidal thoughts**

Psychotic symptoms of bipolar disorder

If you have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, it doesn't mean you are certain to experience symptoms of psychosis. Some people will however, and they can be particularly vivid and unsettling at the time, and can involve the fixed belief of having superior qualities such as wealth, fame or heightened intelligence despite being untrue.

These symptoms mostly occur during manic episodes, although they can happen during depressive episodes, where you may feel particularly intense feelings of guilt or blame for something you not have even done, when seeking treatment for bipolar disorder at Priority, a combination of talking therapies and medication can help reduce the frequency and severity of these symptoms.

Patterns of bipolar disorder symptoms

When living with bipolar disorder, after a certain period of time you (and others around you) will hopefully begin to observe the fluctuations in your mood and be able to more readily spot the signs and symptoms before and during an episode. It is entirely possible that you may feel your mood returning to 'normal' between depressive or manic episodes.

Rapid cycling

Some people have a rapid cycling type of bipolar disorder whereby you may experience discrete mood episodes approximately 4 times a year.

Mixed state

During a mixed state bipolar disorder type, you may find that rather than experiencing extreme symptoms characteristic of depression or mania, you feel a mixture of moods that wouldn't usually be observed at the same time, including having bursts of energy usually coinciding with manic episodes, yet also feeling a sense of hopelessness or self-doubt.

What are the emotional symptoms of bipolar disorder?

- Sadness
- Uncontrollable crying
- Feelings of guilt
- Low self-esteem
- Hopelessness

While these symptoms are not unique to bipolar disorder and depression, if you have any of these symptoms alongside other types of emotional pain and depressive symptoms, and they are particularly intense or long lasting, then you should seek help.

This page was clinically reviewed by **Dr Leona Rowland** (PMB, FRCPS, FRCGP, MRCPsych) in June 2020, and is scheduled to be reviewed again in June 2022. To view all Priority bipolar disorder specialists, please [click here](#).

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For details of how Priority can provide you with assistance regarding mental health and wellbeing, please call 0800 078 3720 or [click here to submit an enquiry form](#). For professionals looking to make a referral, [please click here](#).

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