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Lancashire Early Intervention Service
Hope – Health – Recovery

What is Bipolar Disorder?



Hope Recovery
Health

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What is Bipolar Disorder?

'Bipolar disorder (also known as manic depression) is a mental health disorder that involves severe mood swings accompanied by changes in emotions, thoughts, behaviours, physical health and functioning. The mood swings are more extreme and more prolonged than the everyday ups and downs that we all experience. Emotions may vary from depression and hopelessness through to feeling overly elated ('high') or irritable. People usually go through periods of normal mood in between times.'

Who suffers from Bipolar Disorder?

- About 1% of the population
- Both men and women

What are the causes of Bipolar Disorder?

There is no one reason for why a person develops bipolar disorder. There is evidence, however, to suggest that it is a combination of genetic and environmental factors.

An untreated manic or depressive episode can have particularly negative consequences for the person with the bipolar disorder and for their family.

How you can help yourself if you suffer from bipolar disorder?

❖ **Become an Expert**

The more you know about bipolar disorder and how it can be treated and how to get treatment, the better you will be at dealing with it.

❖ **Develop Regular Patterns of Activity**

It has been found that maintaining fairly regular patterns of eating, sleeping and activity can reduce the frequency and severity of mood shifts.

❖ **Reduce Stress**

Stress has been found to be very closely related to shifts in moods so it is advisable to acknowledge what causes you stress and try to reduce the occurrence of it.

❖ **Recognise and Manage Early Warning Signs**

There are common signs that can be identified in the period just prior to a manic or depressive episode. By identifying your early warning signs and planning actions to take if they occur you could reduce the severity of an episode or even prevent it entirely.

(This information has been adapted from the BABCP Leaflet)