

FACTS ABOUT BI-POLAR

* **Bipolar disorder, also known as bipolar affective disorder, is a mood disorder.**
* **Bipolar disorder can cause your mood to swing from high (mania) to low (depression).**
* **Symptoms of mania can be: increased energy, excitement, impulsive behaviour, increased belief in your own powers and agitation.**
* **Symptoms of depression can be: lack of energy, feelings of worthlessness, low self esteem and suicidal thoughts.**
* **You can also have psychotic symptoms if you have bipolar disorder.**
* **There are different types of bipolar disorder.**
* **There are different causes of bipolar including genetics and environment**
* **You can get medication and psychological treatments for bipolar disorder.**

How is bipolar disorder treated?

**Medications**

Your doctor may prescribe you different medications to treat your symptoms.

There is medication that can help to treat mania. These medications are often called mood stabilisers. The National Institute of Health and Care Excellence (NICE) that recommends the treatment for bipolar disorder call them “antimanic medications” and “prophylactic medication”.

1. Antimanic medication is used to treat symptoms of mania.
2. Prophylactic medication is used to prevent symptoms of mania and to keep you stable.

Doctors can use the same medications as both antimanic and prophylactic medication. They will use different dosages and combinations.

Commonly prescribed medications include:

* Lithium
* Semisodium valproate
* Olanzapine
* Quetiapine
* Respiridone

Your doctor might give you antidepressants to treat depressive symptoms.

If so, your doctor should also prescribe you antimanic medication because antidepressants on their own can cause mania.

**Psychosocial treatments**

As well as medication you can manage your symptoms with psychosocial treatments.

Psychosocial treatments include:

* Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) – this is mainly recommended for the depressive episodes of bipolar disorder.
* Psycho-education – this involves learning about your illness, your treatment and how to recognise signs of becoming unwell again so you can prevent a full-blown episode. Psychoeducation may also be helpful for anyone who is supporting you, such as family, a partner or a trusted colleague.
* Family therapy – this works on family relationships to improve how you feel. This can help reduce any problems in the family which add to, or are because of, your symptoms

Support:

FASA: Tel: 02890803040 e-mail: info@fasaonline.org

Get Self Help: [www.getselfhelp.co.uk](http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk)

Live Life to the Full: [www.llttf.com](http://www.llttf.com)

Mood Gym: [www.moodgym.anu.edu.au](http://www.moodgym.anu.edu.au)