Bipolar Disorder Health Center

**Overview & Facts**

What is bipolar disorder? What causes it? What are the risks? And, what's the best line of treatment? Despite huge advances, much remains to be learned about this condition that affects millions of Americans.

**Bipolar Disorder Basics**

[**What Is Bipolar Disorder?**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/what-is-bipolar-disorder)

Bipolar disorder is a serious mental illness that is characterized by extreme changes in mood, from mania to depression. It can lead to risky behavior, damaged relationships and careers, and even suicidal tendencies if it's not treated.

[**Bipolar Children and Teens**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/bipolar-children-teens)

Although bipolar disorder is more common in older teenagers and young adults, it can affect children as young as 6. Some experts believe the condition is rare and over-diagnosed; others disagree.

[**Bipolar and Women**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/bipolar-disorder-women)

In general, women tend to experience more periods of depression than men, research shows. Women are also at higher risk for rapid cycling, which means having four or more mood episodes in one year.

[**ADHD or Bipolar?**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/bipolar_disorder_or_adhd)

Bipolar disorder and ADHD are being diagnosed more often in American children and teens. There are some similarities in symptoms, so how can a doctor know for sure if the child has bipolar disorder or ADHD?

[**Bipolar TV: Learn More, Live Better**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/bipolar-tv/default.htm)

Catch every episode of Bipolar TV and get not just the basics, but in-depth stories about people living successfully with bipolar disorder. Also see expert interviews that answer questions about triggers, work, marriage, medications, treatment options, and more.

[**Health Check: Feeling the Ups and Downs of Bipolar?**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/bipolar-disorder-health-check/default.htm)

Whether you have bipolar disorder or are concerned about someone who does, WebMD’s Bipolar Disorder Health Check allows you to easily and discreetly assess symptoms, treatments, lifestyle issues, and more.

**Causes**

[**Causes of Bipolar Disorder**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/bipolar-disorder-causes)

Doctors don't completely understand the causes of bipolar disorder. Bipolar disorder often runs in families, and researchers believe there is a genetic component.

**Are You at Risk?**

[**Bipolar Disorder: Who’s at Risk?**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/bipolar-disorder-whos-at-risk)

About 5.7 million U.S. adults are living with bipolar disorder. Bipolar disorder affects men and women equally, as well as all races, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic classes.

**Prevention**

[**Preventing Bipolar**](http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/preventing-bipolar-disorder)

Although bipolar disorder cannot be prevented, early recognition of bipolar warning signs and seeing your doctor regularly can allow you to monitor your mood and medications and keep the illness from escalating.

http://www.webmd.com/bipolar-disorder/guide/bipolar-disorder-overview-facts