



NetCare Access is your connection to mental health and alcohol/drug addiction services in Franklin County.

If you or someone you know is in crisis, visit one of our crisis sites or call our 24-hour NetCare Access Crisis Hotline at (614) 276-C.A.R.E.

## **ACCESSING** Information About

# Bipolar Disorder

### What is bipolar disorder?

Bipolar disorder is a mental illness that causes periods of extreme mood swings – from “mania” (feeling overly “high,” irritable or impulsive) to depression (feeling extremely sad, hopeless and or helpless), with normal mood periods in between. It is also called manic-depressive illness.

Some people with untreated bipolar disorder have repeated periods of depressions and only an occasional episode of mania. Some people have the opposite problem, where mania is the main problem and depression occurs infrequently.

### Facts

- At least 2 million Americans suffer from bipolar disorder. It is extremely distressing and disruptive.
- Like other serious mental illnesses, bipolar disorder is also hard on spouses, family members, friends and employers
- Without treatment, bipolar disorder can lead to problems such as marital break-ups, job loss, alcohol and drug abuse and suicide.
- Bipolar disorder tends to run in families and is believed to be inherited. Despite research efforts, a specific genetic defect associated with the disease has not yet been detected.
- Although uncommon, bipolar disorder can be diagnosed in children under age 12. The symptoms can be confused with attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

### Signs and Symptoms

Signs and symptoms of mania include discrete periods of:

- Increased energy, activity, restlessness, racing thoughts or rapid talking
- Excessive “high” or euphoric feelings
- Extreme irritability and distractibility
- Decreased need for sleep
- Unrealistic beliefs in one’s abilities and powers
- Uncharacteristically poor judgment
- A sustained period of behavior that is different from usual

(over)

## Signs and Symptoms continued...

- Increased sex drive
- Abuse of drugs, particularly cocaine, alcohol and sleeping medications
- Provocative, intrusive or aggressive behavior
- Denial that anything is wrong

Signs and symptoms of depression include discrete periods of:

- Persistent sad, anxious or empty mood
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in ordinary activities, including sex
- Decreased energy, a feeling of fatigue or of being “slowed down”
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions
- Restlessness or irritability
- Sleep Disturbances
- Loss of appetite and weight, or weight gain
- Chronic pain or other persistent bodily symptoms that are not caused by physical disease
- Thoughts of death or suicide, suicide attempts

## Treatment

Most people with bipolar disorder can be helped with treatment. Anyone with bipolar disorder should be under the care of a psychiatrist skilled in diagnosing and treating the disease. Some typical treatment options available are:

- Medications
- Psychotherapy
- Constructing a life chart of mood symptoms, medications and life events may help a health care professional treat the illness
- Electroconvulsive therapy (ECT)

## How to Receive Help:

A person with bipolar disorder can benefit from talking with a mental health professional, such as a psychologist, psychiatrist or social worker, who can assist in providing the patient and his or her family with additional approaches to treatment.

If you or someone you know has bipolar disorder or is in a crisis, contact NetCare Access at (614) 276-C.A.R.E. Mental health assessments are provided at both Netcare’s crisis sites at 199 S. Central Avenue and 741 E. Broad Street on a walk-in, first-come-first-served basis, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

*NetCare Access provides 24-hour crisis intervention and assessment services to Franklin County residents experiencing a mental health or alcohol/drug crisis. For more information on Netcare’s services, contact us at:*

*Netcare Corporation  
199 S. Central Avenue  
Columbus, OH 43223  
Administrative line: (614) 274-9500  
Crisis hotline: (614) 276-C.A.R.E  
[www.netcareaccess.org](http://www.netcareaccess.org)*