

A Bipolar Overview: Discovering Bipolar

Many illnesses abound the world today. Before, people live longer and with only a handful of illnesses. But today's times are very much different because of the many changes that take place. New technology has brought new things into this world. Many inventions, new foods, and all the new stuff that people now enjoy seem to contribute to the many illnesses suffered by millions of people; not to mention the different day to day experiences that people encounter as they go through life.

The typical life of an individual begins as he wakes up in the morning. He then goes through his life everyday doing his routine activities. He goes to work, meet deadlines, attend meetings, and deals with different kinds of people. At home, he has to do chores, and spend time with the family. He also does other activities like going to the supermarket, church, and other important places. And not only that, he encounters different situations everyday that either he welcomes or resents. Many factors contribute to making an individual ill.

Individuals suffering from bipolar disorder have to deal with such condition all the days of their life. Talking about such disorder can be very embarrassing for some people but this should not be so since the illness can be managed especially if you know how to do it.

Before, the condition was popularly called manic depression. But now, it is called bipolar because of the two extreme poles that make up the condition. A good example is the globe having a north and a south pole. When an individual experiences different symptoms associated with one pole, then he's having an episode.

Episode

The episodes are divided into four types: depression, mania, hypomania, and mixed mood. When a person feels depressed, he or she feels sad and don't want to do the usual things. Those that exhibit mania usually start having a high feeling, and become angry and irritable. They are the ones who tend to do risky things. The milder form is known as hypomania which can lead to either depression or mania; this episode also starts with feeling good and the person may think that more things are done. Others who have episodes with feelings of depression and mania mixed together is called mixed mood.

Symptoms

Symptoms are divided into depression and mania. Depression symptoms include feelings of sadness, hopelessness, worthlessness, and guilt. These individuals sleep too much or too little and experience changes in appetite or weight. They always feel tired, restless, and can't make a sound decision. The worst case is when the person thinks about suicide and death. Mania symptoms include an increase in the level of energy, racing thoughts, sleeps less, easily distracted, more self-confident, more talkative, focused but accomplishes little, and often do extreme or unusual activities.

Types

The four main types of bipolar are the following:

1. Bipolar I - this type involves manic and mixed episodes, as well as major episodes of depression. The bipolar patient may experience more than one episode for several days, weeks, or even months. Seasonal changes also seem to affect the symptoms exhibited by the person.
2. Bipolar II - this involves major episodes of depression and a hypomania episode. Normal functioning can also take place in between the said episodes.
3. Cyclothymic Disorder - this is a fluctuating disturbance in mood with hypomania and depression episodes. This is considered the milder form since episodes do not occur regularly and happens for shorter and less severe times.
4. Not Specified - this is a treatable disorder and the symptoms exhibited by the individual does not fall into any of the three types mentioned; the disorder varies from one person to another.

There is no known cause of bipolar disorder. Some say that it has something to do with genetics. But that alone is not enough to cause such disorder. Perhaps other factors contribute to the disorder and that is why further studies are underway.

People from different races, ethnic groups, children, teenagers, or young/older adults can suffer from bipolar disorder. The brain cells of each individual don't work normally if there is an imbalance in the neurotransmitters. These are special chemicals that seem to be involved in the disorder.

If you think you're experiencing bipolar symptoms, then you'd better check with your doctor as soon as possible.