

## MANIC DEPRESSION

Manic Depression or Bipolar illness is a mood disorder. People who suffer from manic depression have mood swings from severe depression to extreme highs or "mania." There generally are periods of normal moods in between the two extremes. Sometimes these mood swings are dramatic and rapid, but most often there are gradual changes which can lead to serious impairment. The nature and severity of this disorder varies with the individual person.

Manic Depression generally strikes before the age of 35. Nearly 1 in 100 people will suffer from this disorder at some point in their lives.

### Signs of Manic Depression:

- \*Increase or decrease in appetite and weight.
- \*Sleep disturbance; sleeping too little or sleeping too much in an irregular pattern.
- \*Loss of energy; excessive fatigue or tiredness.
- \*Change in activity level, either increased or decreased.
- \*Loss of interest or pleasure in usual activities.
- \*Decreased sexual drive.
- \*Diminished ability to think, concentrate, or remember.
- \*Feelings of worthlessness or excessive guilt which may reach unreasonable proportions.
- \*Recurrent thoughts of death or self harm, wishing to be dead or contemplating or attempting suicide.
- \*Aches, pains, constipation that cannot otherwise be explained.

### Periods of mania are characterized by:

- \*Persistently "high" (euphoric) or irritable mood states.
- \*Appetite disturbance.
- \*Decreased need for sleep, at times for days.
- \*Hyperactivity.
- \*Increased sexuality.
- \*Rapid speech, at times being incoherent.
- \*Racing thoughts which result in disorganized speech.
- \*Loss of self control and judgment. This can result in impulsive shopping sprees, to grandiose delusions of ability, strength, etc.
- \*Distractibility.

If you or someone you know is suffering from the signs of Manic Depression, call for help.

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