

The Top Co-Occurring Medical Conditions Related To Bipolar Disorder

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It's known that people with bipolar disorder have higher rates of medical conditions than the general population, so attending to these co-occurring illnesses is an essential part of managing bipolar. Here are several medical conditions more common with bipolar:



[1]

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Metabolic disorders

The metabolic syndrome ^[2], a group of risk factors that increase the likelihood of heart disease, stroke, and diabetes, is thought to be present in 30—50 percent of people with bipolar disorder, noted Stephen M. Strakowski MD, Chair of Psychiatry at Dell Medical School in Texas. “This is approximately a two-fold increase over the general population (although reported rates are widely variable). Particularly common are obesity and type II diabetes mellitus.”

Overweight and obesity

There have been multiple studies that show people with bipolar disorder in North America may be at increased risk for overweight and obesity [3]. This is often attributed to a medication side effect, and while that's a contributing factor, high rates of overweight are observed even in people with bipolar who are not taking medication, Strakowski points out in his book *Bipolar Disorder* (Oxford University Press 2014). Obesity is problematic as it represents a significant risk factor for other medical conditions including type II diabetes mellitus and the metabolic syndrome.

Type II diabetes mellitus

Type II diabetes is up to three times more common in people who have bipolar disorder than the general population, despite high rates of obesity in both groups, writes Strakowski. Therefore, other factors may contribute to the elevated rate of type II diabetes [4], such as certain medications used to treat bipolar. "Additionally, bipolar disorder may involve general hormonal dysregulation of multiple systems that include those responsible for glucose management."

Cardiovascular disease

Research shows that cardiovascular disease [5] in people with bipolar disorder is two to three times higher than with individuals without bipolar, and is a serious concern. The risk factors include high rates of obesity, type II diabetes, smoking, and drug and alcohol abuse. As with obesity, the inherent increased risk of cardiovascular disease could be related to hormonal dysregulation or inflammatory processes associated with bipolar disorder.

Migraine

Studies have rated it as nearly half of people with bipolar developing migraines [6], and as many as two-thirds of women, said Strakowski. This is three to six times more common than individuals without bipolar and usually worsens the course of the illness. "The specific cause of this co-occurrence is unknown, although it may be related to abnormal serotonergic neurotransmission or inflammatory processes."

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URLs in this post:

- [1] Image: <http://www.bphope.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/bipolar-disorder-Medical-Co-Occurring-Conditions.jpg>
- [2] metabolic syndrome: <http://www.bphope.com/diabetes-linked-with-metabolic-changes-in-brain-in-bipolar/>
- [3] overweight and obesity: <http://www.bphope.com/link-between-stress-hormone-and-obesity-in-depressed-and-bipolar-patients/>
- [4] type II diabetes: <http://www.bphope.com/patients-with-severe-mental-illness-rarely-tested-for-diabetes-despite-high-risk-study-shows/>
- [5] cardiovascular disease: <http://www.bphope.com/depression-linked-with-later-cardiovascular-disease-risk/>
- [6] migraines: <http://www.bphope.com/topics/discussion/oes-anyone-get-chronic-headaches-or-migraines-before-a-manic-episode/>

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