A person’s mood alternates between mania and depression, with the moodswing lasting for days, weeks or even months. Treatments for depression and bipolar illness are different and consultation with a doctor or qualified mental health professional is recommended if 4 or more of the following symptoms persist to a significant degree, interfering with normal functioning for over 1 week:

- Heightened mood, exaggerated optimism and self confidence
- Decreased need for sleep (less than 3 hours) without fatigue
- Grandiose delusions, inflated sense of self-importance
- Excessive irritability, aggressive behavior
- Increased physical, mental activity
- Racing speech, flight of ideas, impulsiveness

**SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION**

4 or more recognizable symptoms that are strikingly different from the person’s normal range of feelings and behavior functioning. Depressive symptoms persist for 2 or more weeks and interfere with daily functioning:

- Prolonged sadness or unexplained crying spells
- Significant changes in appetite, sleep patterns
- Increased or persistent irritability, anger, worry, agitation, anxiety
- Overall pessimism or indifference
- Excessive feelings of guilt, worthlessness
- Inability to concentrate, indecisiveness
- Inability to enjoy former interests, social withdrawal
- Unexplained aches, pains
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

**SYMPTOMS OF MANIA**

A person’s mood alternates between mania and depression, with the moodswing lasting for days, weeks or even months. Treatments for depression and bipolar illness are different and consultation with a doctor or qualified mental health professional is recommended if 4 or more of the following symptoms persist to a significant degree, interfering with normal functioning for over 1 week:

- Grandiose delusions, inflated sense of self-importance
- Excessive irritability, aggressive behavior
- Increased physical, mental activity
- Racing speech, flight of ideas, impulsiveness
- Decreased need for sleep (less than 3 hours) without fatigue
- Grandiose delusions, inflated sense of self-importance
- Excessive irritability, aggressive behavior
- Increased physical, mental activity
- Racing speech, flight of ideas, impulsiveness

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**OUR GOALS ARE:**
1. To help provide access to the most qualified doctors & other health care professionals.
2. To provide information on depression and bipolar illness, particularly about diagnosis and treatment.
3. To provide emotional support to depressive and bipolar people, their families and friends.
4. To educate the public on the biochemical nature of the disorders and their medical treatments.
5. To help eliminate the stigma often associated with these disorders.

**We provide the following:**
1. Frequent meetings in which participants, in small groups, share experiences, problems and solutions, and offer mutual support.
2. Monthly lectures by doctors and other health care professionals for current information.
3. A telephone service for information.
4. Cutting edge Brain and Behavior Research magazine is no longer sent to us but can use https://www.bbrfoundation.org/brain-behavior-magazine. Click on “see current issue” OR to get hardcopy indefinitely email info@bbrfoundation.org or call (800) 829-8289 w/ a minimum $5 donation.
5. Our lecture schedule via postal mail.

**DEPRESSION & BIPOLAR DISORDER**
Bipolar illness is a disorder characterized by extreme mood swings of depression and mania, clinically known as bipolar affective disorder. The illness appears to be caused by a biochemical imbalance in the body and can often be controlled by medication. Some depressions, called unipolar affective disorders, may also be caused by biochemical imbalance and respond to medication.

A variety of medications are available for treatment. Psychopharmacologists and psychiatrists who are expert in drug therapy should be consulted. For example, Lithium, a natural salt, has been successful in aiding many patients. Psychotherapy or counseling is often useful as well. Many patients have been successfully stabilized on medication and lead normal lives.