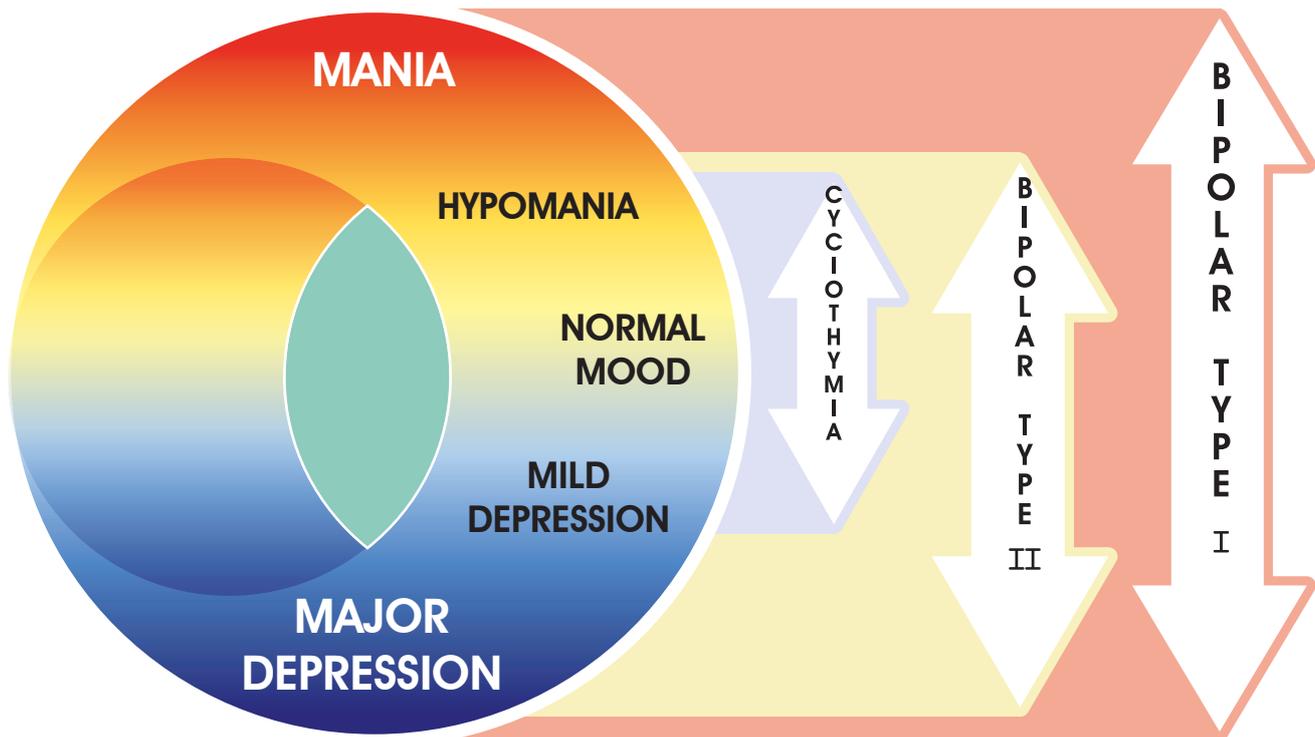




# BIPOLAR MOOD DISORDER

What is it?

## Bipolar disorder mood cycle



Bipolar disorder (or manic depression) is a mental illness that causes extreme mood swings.

Emotions are enhanced and out of proportion to normal reactions. It affects school, work, family and social life.

Bipolar disorder sometimes runs in families and can be due to a chemical imbalance in the brain.

## During the mania phase



Periods of extreme happiness



Boundless energy



Irritability and excitability



Can go for days without proper sleep



Will sometimes use alcohol and other stimulants



May develop unrealistic beliefs in their own capabilities



Typically deny there is anything wrong with them



## During the depression phase



Extreme sadness



Lack of energy



Struggle to enjoy activities previously enjoyed



Thoughts of death and suicide



Difficulty concentrating and making of decisions



Fatigue and feeling unwell



# Management

- There is **no cure for bipolar disorder** – it is a chronic and recurrent condition
- It may require **long-term psychiatric care to monitor medication**, increase treatment compliance and prevent future episodes
- A combination of medication and psychotherapy is recommended
- **Mood stabilisers** even out highs and lows
- **Lithium or anti-epileptic drugs** are commonly used
- **Anti-depressants** are usually given in combination with **mood stabilisers**
- **Anti-psychotic drugs** have been used successfully **to treat manic episodes**
- There is **no instant fix** – it takes time for the medication to work
- **Tranquilisers** can help manage agitation until mood stabilisers start to work
- **Psychotherapy** can help a person gain control of their life
- **Family or support groups** can help the person to come to terms with their condition and to comply with treatment
- In extreme cases only, **electroconvulsive therapy** is effective



## Lifestyle changes



### BAD CHOICES



### GOOD CHOICES



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Real value speaks for itself

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