UNDERSTANDING BIPOLAR DISORDER

BIPOLAR DISORDER AFFECTS A WIDE SPECTRUM OF AREAS, INCLUDING MOOD, ENERGY, ACTIVITY, SLEEP, SPEECH, THINKING, JUDGMENT, AND BEHAVIOR.

SYMPTOMS OF MANIA

FEELINGS

• Feeling unusually “high” and euphoric, and/or “hyper”; feeling “revved up”
• Extreme irritability or anger
• Exaggerated sense of own importance, power, or greatness

THOUGHTS

• Racing thoughts, rapid thinking, or more thoughts than usual
• Difficulty concentrating, easily distracted

BEHAVIORS

• Increased energy and activity, tendency to make multiple plans for many projects
• Increased talking and rapid speech
• Increased sex drive and activity
• Needing little sleep, sleeping less, disrupted sleep
• Poor judgment, tendency to do impulsive and reckless things without concern for consequences (such as spending too much money, engaging in risky sexual activity, driving recklessly, getting into fights)

WHAT IS BIPOLAR DISORDER?

• Bipolar disorder, also known as manic depression, is a brain disorder that causes extreme shifts in mood, energy, and behavior.
• Bipolar disorder is characterized by episodes of “highs” and “lows,” called mania and depression.
• It begins early in life (usually in adolescence or early adulthood) and is generally lifelong.

SYMPTOMS OF DEPRESSION

FEELINGS

• Feeling sad, blue, or down in the dumps, or losing interest in things you usually enjoy
• Feelings of hopelessness and negativity
• Excessive feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or helplessness, or a feeling of being overwhelmed

THOUGHTS

• Slowed thinking or fewer thoughts than usual
• Difficulty concentrating, remembering, making decisions

BEHAVIORS

• Decreased energy and activity, fatigue, feeling “slowed down”
• Less talking and slowed speech
• Loss of interest in sex
• Sleeping too much, or sleeping poorly
• Thoughts of death or suicide, suicide plans or attempts