

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

- Breakfast Club Support Group
- Peer Support Group
- Your Recovery Journey
- Strengthening Families Together
- ACHIEVES: Literacy & Numeracy
- ACHIEVES: Pre-employment Skills
- J. Dean McAllister Memorial Bursary

Pamphlets, reference books, videos, cassettes and information packages are available at our office.

### The Schizophrenia Society strives to:

- Promote and provide education, information & support
- Advocate for legislative change
- Support schizophrenia research
- Raise funds to accomplish these objectives

### Interested in helping out?

*If you would like to become a member or to volunteer, please call us at 622-1595 or drop by the office.*

## Miramichi Chapter

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Office: 1756 Water Street, Suite B

**Board Meeting**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of month

**Support Meetings**  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of month – 10 AM  
At the Fundy Line Restaurant

**Every Wednesday 6:30 PM**  
For Location call Natalie at 622-1595

#### Website

[www.schizophreniasociety.nb.ca](http://www.schizophreniasociety.nb.ca)

#### Email

[ssnbmiramichi@nb.aibn.com](mailto:ssnbmiramichi@nb.aibn.com)



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## BIPOLAR DISORDER



## Did you know..?

*Bipolar disorder* is a mood disorder which causes unusual shifts in a person's energy and ability to function.

*Bipolar disorder* is a biochemical condition that results in an imbalance of the neurotransmitters in the brain.

*Bipolar disorder* is characterized by mild to severe mood swings, high-to-low, mania to depression, restlessness to listlessness.

*Bipolar disorder* is found among all ages, races, ethnic groups and social classes.

*Bipolar disorder* affects 1% of Canadians ages 15 and over and about 1 in 50 adults over 25 years. Hospitalization rates for bipolar disorder in general hospitals are increasing among women and men between 15 and 24 years of age.

Individuals with mood disorders are at high risk of suicide.

## There is hope.

While there is no known cure for bipolar, it is a very treatable disease.

With early diagnosis, intervention and treatment; recovery is possible.

Employment and support strategies, as well as, local support groups are available.

## Recovery is Expected

**Sources:** [Strengthening Families Together](#), 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition  
Schizophrenia Society of Canada, 2008  
CMHA website  
[On an Even Keel](#) Theriault, C., et al., Beresford, NB

## Types of Bipolar Disorder

**BIPOLAR I:** This is occasionally referred to as the "classic" form of the illness. The individual has experienced at least one manic episode and has also experienced depression. These are usually recurring episodes. The person may have experienced hallucinations or delusions in either a manic or depressive episode.

**BIPOLAR II:** The individual experiences depression and hypomania, which is milder than mania. Individuals with Bipolar II do not experience psychotic symptoms.

**CYCLOTHYMIC DISORDER** is a chronic, milder version of bipolar disorder and lasts for at least 2 years, in which the individual experiences both mild lows and highs, which last for a few days, as opposed to weeks. Cycles of depression and mania are shorter and less intense.

**RAPID CYLER:** The individual alternates between highs and lows within a short period of time.

**MIXED STATE:** The symptoms involve both mania and depression occurring at the same time or alternating frequently during the day. Mixed state presents the greatest risk of suicide

## Causes

The exact cause of bipolar disorder is relatively unknown. It is likely caused by a combination of biological and psychological factors, since there is a dynamic relationship between body and mind.

**Biological:** Researchers have discovered a high incidence of diagnosed bipolar individuals who have other family members with the disease. They have also found that bipolar disorder is a result of an organic brain malfunction and that endocrine disorders have often been associated with mood changes.

**Psychological:** Certain stress factors may predispose individuals to mood disorders. A combination of personality traits in alternating patterns may be a cause of bipolar disorder as are "learned helplessness" and "excessive defense mechanisms" ( strategies used to deal with stress).

## Symptoms

Manic symptoms in bipolar disorder include:

- High energy
- Persistent elevated or euphoric mood
- Excessive talking
- Talking too fast or too loud
- Excessive spending
- Lack of sleep
- Easily irritated
- Easily distracted
- Feelings of grandiosity
- Aggressive behaviour
- Racing thoughts
- Poor judgment
- Loss of ability to control impulses
- Unusual sexual behaviour

Symptoms of depression in bipolar disorder include:

- Persistent sadness or despair
- Change in productivity
- Changes in sleep and appetite
- Loss of pleasure or energy,
- Difficulty thinking, concentrating, or making decisions
- Excessive crying
- Social withdrawal
- Thoughts of death or suicide

Symptoms interfere with daily life at home, at work, or with friends and last most of the day, nearly every day, for at least two weeks.

## Treatment

Treatment involves a combination of medication and psychosocial treatments. The medications are known as *mood stabilizers*. Psychosocial treatments could involve psychotherapy, education, and support groups.

Treatment for bipolar disorder needs to be continuous, even though there may be long periods of stability between episodes.