

Bipolar, Physical Health Issues

Statistics show that people with bipolar illness are likely to die earlier than people without mental illness. Many think a majority of these deaths are related to suicide, but that is not true. Research has shown that a majority of our population who have mental health issues die earlier than the general population. Also, people with Bipolar illness are more susceptible to heart disease, diabetes, pulmonary disorders, the flu, and pneumonia.

Getting diagnosed early and being treated for bipolar illness can increase longevity for people with the illness. I have expressed, in my support groups, that with age the illness can increase in its severity if not monitored correctly.

Toxic levels of medication are also a significant factor in one's health. Managing medication with your doctor should be the first thing to be addressed with your initial consultation. All previous medications should be told to the doctor. The right medication for you may not be the right one for someone else. It may take time for you and your doctor to get the right cocktail to best manage your illness. Be patient, and work very closely with your doctor, and you will succeed and get the best medication for you.

Proper exercise is one of the factors that can contribute to living longer, especially if you are bipolar. I personally find that after a workout I am more relaxed, feel a sense of accomplishment, feel calmer, my mood is better, and I am ready to have a more productive day. In the past when I was not exercising, I found it very difficult to get up in the morning, get my gym clothes on and head to the gym. I attribute this to lack of enthusiasm, not getting the proper sleep (insomnia) and improper medication management.

Many people who exercise have positive results, and it can affect their mood. When one exercises, the body releases endorphins, which makes the person feel good. Feeling good is a great way to combat bipolar illness. Not only does exercise help with depression but also with stress. This doesn't mean that it works for everyone, but there are indications that it frequently helps ease hypomania. Certain exercise helps people sleep better and create a calming effect. A few of these exercises are swimming, running, walking fast, etc. Exercise can affect people in different ways. So, it is important that individuals monitor their moods while on an exercise regimen. There are other studies that have shown that if a person combines exercise with nutrition and wellness training, it will help with depression. People with bipolar illness can develop weight issues, in fact the outcome may be weight gain. Mood stabilizers, antidepressants, and other bipolar medications can cause weight gain. It is advised if one was to gain an excessive amount of weight, talk to your doctor, for your medication may need to be adjusted. I personally exercise an average of 45 minutes, 5 to 6 days a week. I have, in the past, checked with my doctor when changing my exercise regimen. I have stopped or reduced exercising that causes me pain and discomfort. Checking your target heart rate while exercising and at rest is advised.

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