



Mills Perinatal Wellness Group, PC

What is Bipolar Disorder?

Bipolar sufferers will usually have their first episode in their late teens or early twenties. For some women though, giving birth will trigger their first bipolar episode. A person with bipolar disorder will experience extreme highs (mania) and lows (depression), which can continue for weeks and, in some cases, months. It is an uncommon disorder and there is usually a family history. The depressive symptoms of bipolar are the same as for depression. Many times individuals are misdiagnosed with a unipolar depression diagnosis. Using the MDQ screener in conjunction with EPDS can support the correct diagnosis of BPD. BPD is a risk factor for postpartum psychosis which is a severe diagnosis and needs medical attention.

Signs and Symptoms of Mania

Feelings

- an excessively happy mood – being high as a kite
- sometimes an irritable mood rather than happy mood, or irritable mood mixed with an excessively happy mood
- having lots of energy, moving quickly as though driven by an internal motor
- speaking very quickly, trying to keep up with your racing thoughts
- less need to sleep; feeling energetic on little or no sleep
- feeling overly confident in your looks, abilities and talents
- feeling that you are invincible and engaging in increased risk taking, such as dangerous driving
- increased libido that can sometimes lead to inappropriate behavior
- having lots of plans and acting on them in a hasty and disorganized fashion
- increased spending, often on things you do not need or do not want and resulting in debt
- behaving rashly and in ways that are out of character, such as quitting work or leaving a relationship in an abrupt and irrational manner
- increased alcohol and drug use
- In extreme cases there may be psychotic symptoms and a loss of touch with reality.