

## Major Triggers of Bipolar Episode

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### INTRODUCTION

Bipolar episodes can be triggered by the individual's lifestyle and environmental factors. Few factors that may worsen bipolar symptoms or trigger bipolar episodes are listed below:

#### Stress

An initial episode may be triggered by major life changes or traumatic events, such as the death of a loved one or financial difficulties. The way an individual cope with stress can also affect how his/her bipolar disorder progresses. A research showed people with bipolar disorder having a relapse of their condition and has been found experiencing more stressful life events compared with those who were in a more stable mood phase. The researchers concluded that bipolar individuals tend to be more "sensitive" to stressors, and hence require psychosocial treatments as an important component for successfully managing their condition.

#### Childbirth

Several researches show the relation between childbirth and bipolar. Researchers found that the risk for mood disorder episodes increases during pregnancy in the postpartum period in women with bipolar disorder. Researchers found that around 50 percent of women with bipolar disorder experiences at least one mood episode during pregnancy tenure or within 12 months after childbirth. It's also notable that both men and women with bipolar disorder may be triggered by childbirth.

#### Medication

Treatment for bipolar disorder includes medications, like mood stabilizers, antipsychotics, and antidepressants. Few antidepressants, such as Prozac (fluoxetine) and Zoloft (sertraline), may worsen symptoms of the disorder and possibly even trigger a manic episode, Doctors suggest that individual with bipolar disorder, should take an antidepressant in combination with mood stabilizer or

antipsychotic medication.

#### Seasonal Changes

For some people with bipolar disorder, there's a seasonal pattern to mood episodes. According to research, manias are more common in the spring and summer, while depressive symptoms are more common in the fall and winter. Alternately some people experience the opposite. Women under the age of 35 were also found to be more likely to have seasonal pattern in manic and mixed episodes.

#### Poor Sleep

Lack of sleep is a direct trigger of bipolar mood episodes. Poor sleep or disturbances in normal sleeping patterns, including jet lag, can all lead to intense mood swings. However, there is evidence that psychological counseling can be helpful. Hence, It is advisable that individual with Bipolar Disorder must consult doctor for a plan to ensure getting enough quality sleep.

#### Drug and Alcohol Use

Researchers found, substance abuse is common among people who have mental illness as an alternative to cope with their symptoms. Almost 30 to 50 percent of people with bipolar disorder develop substance abuse disorder. Usage of drugs can worsen bipolar mood swings and lead to an increase in suicidal thoughts or behaviors. Substance use or withdrawal can cause symptoms attributed to bipolar disorder, which involves agitation, anxiety, and paranoia. Alcohol usage can make an individual less likely to respond to treatment and more likely to be hospitalized. One should rather try medication and psychosocial therapy.

#### Caffeine

Caffeine is a stimulating agent; it may trigger manic episodes, because changes in sleeping patterns, and affect the way one's body breaks down the medications taken to treat the condition, according to the recent research. Individual should consult doctor about caffeine consumption and how it may affect symptoms.

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