

Kinds of Depression

Regional Headquarters Materials

Unipolar

“Major Depression.” It has a combination of symptoms that interfere with a person’s ability to eat, sleep, work and enjoy life.

Dysthymia

Less severe than unipolar. It is characterized by a depressed mood which can last for an average of two years. Symptoms include:

- Poor appetite or overeating
- Insomnia or hypersomnia
- Low energy or fatigue
- Low self-esteem
- Poor concentration or difficulty making decisions
- Feelings of hopelessness

Bipolar Disorder

“Manic-depressive Disorder.” Exhibits incredible mood swings in which a person experiences terrible lows (depression) and inappropriate highs (mania) which can last days or months or years. In between the manic-depressive mood swings, they feel and act normal. Some bipolar disorders can last throughout a person’s lifetime, but with medical control the person can function normally. Switching from one state to the other is called *cycling*, a phenomenon that varies from person to person. *Rapid cycling* is a very quick switching from one pole to the other.

When manic, a person can appear to be positive, excited about life, euphoric, active, brimming with ideas, unusually confident with a high sense of self-esteem.