

## Who can I contact for help?

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### Substance Abuse Service Helpline

 (844) 804-7500

### Alcoholics Anonymous

 [www.aa.org](http://www.aa.org)

### National Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence

 (800) 622-2255

### Families Anonymous

 (800) 736-9805

### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

 (800) 273-8255

### Alcoholics Anonymous—Online Chat Meetings

 [aa-intergroup.org/directory\\_chat.php](http://aa-intergroup.org/directory_chat.php)

# Co-occurring Alcohol Use Disorder and Bipolar Disorder



## What is bipolar disorder?

**Bipolar disorder** is a mental health condition that causes someone to experience feelings of highs and lows, also known as mania and depressive moods, over a certain period of time.

There are different types of bipolar disorder. Each type is based on the amount of time that symptoms last and their severity.

## What are potential symptoms of mania?

- Bursts of energy
- Overconfidence
- Decreased sleep
- Easily annoyed
- Unusual talkativeness
- Easily distracted
- Poor decisionmaking
- Racing thoughts

## What are potential symptoms of depression?

- Loss of interest in activities
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Weight loss or gain
- Fatigue
- Depressed mood most of the day
- Trouble concentrating
- Feeling worthless
- Suicidal thoughts

## What is a co-occurring alcohol use disorder (COD-alcohol)?

A person with an alcohol use disorder (AUD) may also have a mental illness, such as bipolar disorder. This is called **co-occurring alcohol use disorder (COD-alcohol)**.

Alcohol can influence the onset of mental health symptoms and vice versa, although the direct cause for each can be uncertain.

## How are bipolar disorder and AUD connected?

- Since alcohol is a depressant and can potentially create feelings of calmness, people may use alcohol to control manic episodes
- People may drink alcohol to cope with symptoms caused by bipolar disorder
- Prolonged drinking has the potential to induce depressive episodes
- Alcohol can help someone with bipolar disorder temporarily feel better, but later they can feel worse
- Drinking to cope with symptoms of bipolar disorder can lead to long-term health problems

## What can I do if I have AUD and bipolar disorder?

- **Ask for help.** The sooner you get treated, the sooner you can reduce the risks associated with a co-occurring disorder.
- Receiving treatment for one or both conditions is entirely up to how ready you feel. Your treatment plan will be decided with a health care professional.
- Treating a bipolar disorder can have a positive impact on an alcohol use disorder and vice versa. Speaking with health care professionals can help in finding the root source of distress.
- Receiving treatment for one or both conditions means a step forward in living a healthier lifestyle. You will be on the right path to participating in daily tasks that might have been hard to do before.