

# A NEW DAY PEDIATRIC PSYCHOLOGY

HEALING THE HURT. EDUCATING THE MIND. INSPIRING THE SOUL.



**A New Day Pediatric Psychology, PLLC** falls under the vision of Dr. Ann-Louise T. Lockhart, Pediatric Psychologist and Board Certified in Child and Adolescent Psychology.

A New Day specializes in evidence-based behavioral health treatment, interventions, and psychological evaluations for children, adolescents, and adults with known or suspected behavioral health and/or medical conditions affecting all aspects of development and functioning.

## Bipolar Disorder: The Changing of Moods

WRITTEN BY ASHLEY MOHESKY, FEATURED WRITER



Bipolar Disorder is a diagnosis that affects one's mood and ability to regulate energy, as well as participate in daily activities. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, there are four types of bipolar disorder: Bipolar I, Bipolar II, Cyclothymic, and Other Specified and Unspecified Bipolar. We will cover the first three in this article.

Although Bipolar disorder is typically diagnosed during late teen years and early adulthood, it can also occasionally appear in children. A thorough background history, current experiences, and family history should all be considered prior to making a diagnosis. In other circumstances, Bipolar disorder can also first appear during a woman's pregnancy or following childbirth. Most individuals with Bipolar tend to seek help when experiencing the depressive symptoms, rather than the mania. So, they are often misdiagnosed with major depression.

**Bipolar I** is characterized by manic episodes (high energy, rapid speech, decreased need for sleep, highly irritable, risky behaviors) for seven days, along with occasional depressive symptoms (feeling down/sad, low energy, increased appetite, trouble concentrating, forgetful). Individuals with this type of bipolar typically have to seek medical attention, because their symptoms are so severe that they cannot function in daily life.

**Bipolar II**, although similar to Bipolar I, includes symptoms that are less severe. Individuals will experience hypomania (a mild form of mania). They often describe hypomania as a heightened sense of creativity and positive emotions. Bipolar II involves at least one depressive episode lasting two weeks and at least one hypomanic episode.

**Cyclothymic disorder** is defined as experiencing both hypomanic and depressive periods within a two-year time frame, but symptoms do not meet the criteria for a diagnosis of hypomanic or depressive episodes. The symptoms do not last as long compared to Bipolar I.

For more information on symptoms, visit the website for the National Institute of Mental Health <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/bipolar-disorder/index.shtml>

People with Bipolar are not trying to be "moody" or obnoxiously happy. Their brains do not know how to regulate emotions appropriately; therefore, it is important to be patient and understanding when a loved one is enduring a manic/hypomanic or depressive episode. Individuals diagnosed with bipolar can live very fulfilling lives when receiving the proper treatment and support from family and friends.

Also, one of the myths of bipolar is that people change moods in an instant. This leads to the comment: "You are so bipolar!" This is a phrase we need to eliminate from our language. It is both inaccurate and insensitive.

For parents of children with one of these disorders, it can be hard to know if they are experiencing regular mood irregularities due to growth and hormones or if they are symptoms related to the diagnosis.

Remember to be gentle with yourself and your child, because both of you are doing the best you can. Challenges are going to be stressful and the thought of giving up may arise, but they can be overcome with support and perseverance.

Bipolar in children and adults is not easy, but it does not have to control a person's life. You are the author of your future, and it can be amazingly beautiful.

## Did you know?

**Did you know that  
A New Day Pediatric Psychology  
now has 2 Pediatric  
Psychologists on our team?!**



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specifically trained to help  
children and their parents work  
through and adjust to medical  
diagnoses using  
psychological interventions.**

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schedule your appointment.

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**This newsletter is issued every first and  
third week of each month.**

**The purpose of this newsletter is to  
educate, inspire, and bring healing and  
awareness by discussing a variety of  
behavioral health and medical conditions.**

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