



## BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

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### How are infectious agents related to bipolar disorder?

Several markers of infectious agents have been investigated in people with bipolar disorder due to their neurological interactions. Any association between these infectious agents and risk of subsequent bipolar disorder remains unclear.

Infectious agents include *Toxoplasma gondii* and Borna Disease Virus. *Toxoplasma gondii* is a parasitic protozoa usually hosted by domestic cats and other warm-blooded animals, including humans. Borna Disease Virus is the key causative component of Borna disease, a neurological syndrome primarily affecting animals, but sometimes humans.

### What is the evidence for markers of infectious agents in people with bipolar disorder?

Moderate to high quality evidence suggests a small effect of increased markers for borna disease virus and for *Toxoplasma gondii* in people with bipolar disorder compared to controls. Increases in *Toxoplasma gondii* antibodies were particularly apparent in people with bipolar disorder who were under 40 years of age. There were no differences in herpesviruses antibodies between patients and controls.

For more information see the technical table



*NeuRA (Neuroscience Research Australia) is one of the largest independent medical and clinical research institutes in Australia and an international leader in neurological research.*

*Diseases of the brain and nervous system pose the greatest health, economic and social burden of any disease group because they are chronic, debilitating and have no known cures.*

*Medical research is the cornerstone of efforts to advance the health and wellbeing of families and the community. Our dedicated scientists are focussed on transforming their research into significant and practical benefits for all patients.*

*While we hope you find this information useful, it is always important to discuss any questions about bipolar disorder or its treatment with your doctor or other health care provider.*

### HOW YOUR SUPPORT HELPS

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