



# NeuRA

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## BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

October 2021

### How is maternal illness during pregnancy related to risk for bipolar disorder?

Maternal illness during pregnancy, particularly involving infectious agents has been associated with brain and behavioural abnormalities in the offspring, and so have been investigated as possible risk factors for bipolar disorder.

### What is the evidence for maternal illness during pregnancy as a risk factor for bipolar disorder?

Moderate to low quality evidence suggests a medium to large effect of increased risk of bipolar disorder after exposure to maternal influenza during pregnancy, although when the trimesters were analysed separately, the effect remained significant only in the third trimester, and results were inconsistent across two studies.

There were no associations between risk of bipolar disorder and exposure to maternal urinary tract infections, herpes simplex virus 2, hypertensive illness or maternal diabetes.

For more information see the technical table



## NeuRA

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*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

We are able to make significant advances due to the generosity of countless people. Your donation allows us to continue to work towards transforming lives. For information on how you can support our research, phone **1300 888 019** or make a secure donation at [neura.edu.au](http://neura.edu.au).