



BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

November 2021

What is treatment non-adherence?

Non-adherence to treatments is a widespread issue that hampers clinical management of many mental disorders. It reduces the success of the treatment regimen and the ability to achieve remission from illness, but it also increases the burden for relapse treatments, emergency admissions and hospitalisation. Greater adherence to treatment can contribute not only to more successful disorder management and better quality of life, but also to improved attitudes towards treatment and medication, as well as increasing insight and confidence.

What is the evidence for treatment non-adherence?

Moderate to high quality evidence found around 44% of people with bipolar disorder were non-adherent to psychotropic medications. Moderate to low quality evidence found factors associated with antipsychotic non-adherence included poor insight, substance use, negative attitudes toward medication, medication side effects, and to a lesser extent, cognitive impairments.

In children and adolescents, moderate to high quality evidence found factors associated with medication non-adherence included greater illness severity, medication side effects, and having a comorbid substance use disorder or ADHD. Moderate quality evidence found factors associated with medication adherence in children and adolescents included having positive patient and family attitudes toward care, a positive clinician-patient relationship, adherence to psychotherapy, good insight, and a comorbid medical illness.

For more information see the technical table



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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/donate.