



# NeuRA

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BIPOLAR DISORDERS LIBRARY

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## BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

November 2021

### What is bipolar II disorder?

Bipolar II disorder is a common, recurrent, and disabling psychiatric illness. The lifetime incidence ranges from 1% to 11% depending on the method of diagnosis. DSM-IV defines bipolar II disorder as a lifetime history of at least one episode of major depression plus at least one episode of hypomania. By definition, individuals with bipolar II disorder never experience full-blown mania, unlike those with a diagnosis of bipolar I disorder. Bipolar II disorder is characterised by multiple and often protracted depressive episodes, and a lower probability of returning to premorbid levels of functioning between episodes.

### What is the evidence for treatments for bipolar II disorder?

Moderate to low quality evidence suggests the antipsychotic quetiapine may be an effective treatment for bipolar II depression. Low quality evidence is uncertain as to the benefits of other medications.



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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.*

For further information see the technical table

### 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 [www.neura.edu.au](http://www.neura.edu.au).

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