

## BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

June 2020

### What is high risk for bipolar disorder?

People deemed at high risk for bipolar disorder can be identified by having a family history of the disorder and/or having subclinical symptoms of depression and/or mania that are not severe enough for a diagnosis. Reducing the development of severe symptoms may increase the probability of good long-term outcomes.

The course of bipolar disorder and its treatment response tends to worsen over time, highlighting the importance of early intervention. Over the last 15 years, a biopsychosocial framework for bipolar disorder has obtained growing recognition and an increasingly multimodal treatment approach has emerged. Accordingly, along with psychopharmacological treatments, psychosocial therapies have been proposed as a means of addressing psychological vulnerabilities, family distress, and life stress.

### What is the evidence for psychosocial treatments for people at high risk for bipolar disorder?

Moderate to low quality evidence suggests there are benefits of early interventions, particularly family-orientated therapies, for improving mood and functioning in children and adolescents at risk of bipolar disorder. There were no reviews focussing on adults at risk.

For further 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.*

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