

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

BIPOLAR DISORDERS Factsheet

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What is attention deficit hyperactivity disorder?

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) is a behavioural disorder characterised by inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity. The estimated prevalence in children under 18 years in the general population is around 5%. It is more prevalent in males than in females. ADHD can persist into adulthood with an estimated prevalence of 2.5% of ADHD in the adult general population. The DSM-5 requires that ADHD in adults began in childhood, with inattentive or hyperactive-impulsive symptoms needing to be present before age 12.

What is the evidence for rates of ADHD in people with bipolar disorder?

Moderate to high quality evidence finds around 17% of adults with bipolar disorder also have ADHD. Prevalence of ADHD was higher in small than in large studies and was higher in studies from Western Asia (Turkey and Iran) than in studies from America or Europe.

Conversely, around 8% of adults with ADHD also have bipolar disorder. Prevalence of bipolar disorder was higher in studies using the DSM than the ICD to diagnose bipolar disorder, and in studies from America than in studies from Europe or Taiwan. Age of bipolar disorder onset occurred earlier in those with ADHD than in those without ADHD.

Moderate quality evidence finds around 10% of children and youth with ADHD go on to develop bipolar disorder. This represents a large increase in the risk of bipolar disorder in children and youth with ADHD when compared to children and youth without any psychiatric disorder.

Moderate quality evidence finds a small increased risk of ADHD in people with bipolar disorder compared to people with major depression, and a medium-sized increased risk of ADHD in people with any mood disorder compared to people without any mood disorder. Prevalence of ADHD ranged from 17% in adults with bipolar disorder, to 43% in adolescents with bipolar disorder, to 73% in children with bipolar disorder.

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

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/.