

# Manic Depression (Bi-Polar Disorder)

Adapted from *Manic Depression Fact Sheet:*  
*National Alliance for the Mentally Ill (NAMI)*



A bridge for law enforcement  
and community collaboration

## What is it?

- Characterized by extreme mood swings, alternating from periods of severe highs (mania) to extreme lows (depression). Can cause bizarre, outrageous behavior.
- Affects approximately 2.3 million Americans (almost 1% of the population)
- Affects thoughts, feelings, physical health, behavior and functioning.

## Symptoms:

Four distinct types of moods that can occur over the course of the illness.

**MANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS MAY LIMIT THE PERSON'S ABILITY TO RESPOND APPROPRIATELY TO POLICE COMMANDS.**

- **Mania:**
  - ◆ Sense of heightened energy, creativity, social ease
  - ◆ Euphoria
  - ◆ Lack of self-awareness
  - ◆ Irritability and blaming if someone points out something is wrong
  - ◆ Inability to sleep
  - ◆ Racing thoughts
  - ◆ Easily distracted—rapid shifts in attention
  - ◆ Inflated feeling of power, greatness or importance
  - ◆ Reckless activity
- **Hypomania:**
  - ◆ similar symptoms as above, but less severe
  - ◆ episodes often feel so good, they may cause sufferer to stop taking medication
- **Depression:**
  - ◆ No capacity to experience pleasure
  - ◆ Profound sadness and irritability
  - ◆ Changes in sleep patterns
  - ◆ Decrease in appetite
  - ◆ Inability to concentrate
  - ◆ Thoughts of suicide
  - ◆ Hallucinations—auditory, visual or both
  - ◆ Delusions
- **Mixed episode:**
  - ◆ Most disabling -- **PERSON MOST AT RISK OF SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR**
  - ◆ Can experience both mania and depression simultaneously or at different times during the day.