

Borderline Personality Disorder

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is a mental health disorder that affects up to 3% of adults.

Signs and Symptoms of BPD

Individuals with BPD have difficulty regulating their emotions, which may result in:

- Extreme mood swings
- Extreme views of others, either all good or all bad
- Unstable relationships with others
- Unstable sense of identity
- Feelings of emptiness and lack of self-worth
- Impulsive behavior, such as spending large amounts of money, binge eating, using drugs or excessive alcohol, reckless driving
- Suicidal thoughts and attempts (up to 6% of people with BPD die by suicide)
- Difficulty keeping a job
- Frequent use of medical services (both inpatient and outpatient) for mental or physical health symptoms

Other mental health disorders are common in people with BPD, including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, substance use disorders, posttraumatic stress disorder, and other personality disorders.

What Causes BPD?

The risk of BPD may be increased by genetic factors (a family history of BPD) as well a history of childhood abuse (emotional, physical, sexual) or neglect.

How Is BPD Diagnosed?

The diagnosis of BPD is made a clinician, typically by interviews and questionnaires. Examples of some questions that may be used to diagnose BPD are:

Do you often wonder who you really are?

Do you sometimes feel that another person appears in you that does not fit you?

Do your feelings toward other people quickly change into opposite extremes (for example, from love and admiration to hate and disappointment)?

Do you often feel angry?

Do you often feel empty?

Have you been extremely moody?

Have you ever deliberately hurt yourself (for example, cut or burned yourself)?

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Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is a mental health condition that affects people's ability to regulate their emotions.

Signs and symptoms of BPD include



Intense mood swings



Viewing others as all good or all bad



Unstable relationships with family and friends



Distorted or unstable sense of identity



Chronic feelings of emptiness



Impulsive behavior



Self-harm and suicidal thoughts and behaviors



Difficulty keeping a job



Frequent use of medical services



Psychotherapy, or talk therapy, is the first-line treatment for BPD. Medications can be helpful for treating specific symptoms or other mental health conditions that may co-occur with BPD.

How Is BPD Treated?

The mainstay of treatment for BPD is psychotherapy, which refers to various forms of talk therapy. Psychotherapy is particularly useful when symptoms of BPD are severe (such as suicidal thoughts). Educating patients about their illness and involving them in the care plan can also be helpful.

While medications can be helpful for treating other mental health conditions that exist along with BPD, no class of medications has been shown to be consistently effective for improving symptoms of BPD in randomized clinical trials.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Cleveland Clinic

my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9762-borderline-personality-disorder-bpd

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