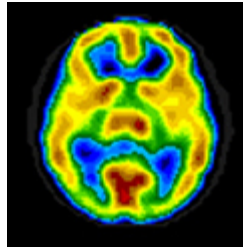
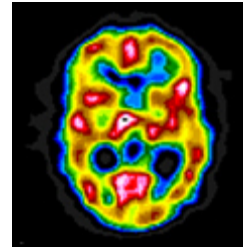


Bipolar Disorder

Inner Views



Normal



Bipolar Disorder

Commonly misdiagnosed.

Bipolar Disorder (also known as Manic-Depressive Illness) affects more than 2,300,000 American adults. Without effective treatment, the illness can lead to suicide in nearly 20% of cases.

Many patients with Bipolar Disorder are misdiagnosed. This occurs most often when a person with Bipolar II Disorder (the less severe form of the disorder), whose hypomania is not recognized, is diagnosed with unipolar depression, or when a patient with severe psychotic mania is misjudged to have schizophrenia. Differentiating the initial onset of Bipolar Disorder from schizophrenia is often an extremely difficult diagnosis in acutely psychotic patients.

The psychosis and paranoia that accompany Bipolar Disorder increase the difficulty of treatment compliance. It is often essential that family members be available to encourage the patient to keep-up with medications. However, unless the assisting family members fully understand and approve of the treatment plan, family members afraid of the stigma of mental illness and/or scornful of psychiatric medicine often collude with the non-compliance decisions of the patient.

Bipolar Disorder Treatment Challenges:

In addition, since Bipolar Disorder is usually quite responsive to medication, once the disorder improves, patients feel so normal they do not believe they ever had a chronic problem to begin with. So, they stop taking the medications, which will result in increasing the chances for relapse. This is actually one of the most significant problems in people diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder.

When a Picture is worth MORE than a thousand words.

Brain SPECT Imaging can provide objective assessment data that can be quite helpful in the physician's differential diagnosis of Bipolar Disorder. In addition, it can provide the patient and the patient's family members with graphic evidence that Bipolar Disorder is a biological problem that can be effectively treated as such. Through this better understanding of the problem, both patients and family members are more likely to comply with and support treatment plans.

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