

# Serious Mental Illness

& Its treatment

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# Major Mental Illnesses:

- **Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders**

- 1% lifetime prevalence
- Commonly accepted as the *cancer* of mental illness

- **Bipolar Disorder**

- 2-6% lifetime prevalence

- **Major Depressive Disorder**

- 8-12% lifetime prevalence

**Q:** What separates normal extreme behaviour from mental illness?

# Cost and Impact on Society

- 20% of the Canadian population will experience a mental illness in their life time
- 10-20% of Canadian youth are affected by mental illness
- Suicide accounts for 24% of all deaths among 15-24 year olds
- The economic cost to the health care system in Canada was estimated at \$7.9 billion in 1998
- Schizophrenia is youth's greatest disabler, striking in the 16-30 year old age group and affecting 1 person in 100

**Q:** What disorder has the poorest prognosis and outcome?

# Defining features of Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders:

- Positive Symptoms: **Hallucinations, Delusions, Disordered thinking, Disordered speech & behaviour**
- Negative Symptoms: **Normally Present, but now impaired. (Example: energy, motivation, initiative, ability to experience pleasure)**
- Change in Function: **Major limitation to outcome, often first prodromal signs**
- Differential diagnosis: **Used to eliminate other possible causes of behaviour such as**  
**Drug induced, Physical Trauma, Malnourishment...**
- **Q: What is the most common positive symptom experienced in schizophrenia?**

# Types of Bipolar Disorder:

- Type 1: Manic episode, may have had depressive episode in past
  - Type 2: Hypo manic and depressive episodes
  - Mixed: Symptoms of both mania and depression at once
    - > e.g. Depressed mood combined with extreme agitation
  - Rapid Cycling: Frequent switches between manic and depressive episodes
  - Spectrum: Doesn't meet rigid diagnostic criteria, but still disrupts life function
- Q: Bipolar disorder is often complicated by other illness. What is the most common co morbid condition?

# Symptoms of Bipolar Disorder:

- Manic/Hypo Manic Symptoms:
  - > A high, irritable, angry or aggressive mood
  - > Little need for sleep
  - > Increased loud or quick talking
  - > Racing thoughts
  - > More active than usual
  - > Inflated feeling of power or importance
  - > Doing reckless things without concern about consequence (spending money, inappropriate sex, risky business investments)
  - > May Include psychotic symptoms

# Symptoms of Bipolar Disorder:

## ○ Depressive Symptoms:

- > Insomnia or sleeping too much
- > Depressed mood
- > Weight gain or weight loss
- > Decreased pleasure in activities
- > Fatigue or decreased energy
- > Problems concentrating or making decisions
- > Feeling slowed down or too agitated
- > Feeling worthless or guilty
- > Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide

Q: What type of bipolar disorder has the highest risk of suicide?

# Defining features of Major Depressive Disorder:

- Unipolar/Major Depression:
    - > Mood Symptoms: Abnormal depressed mood, loss of interest and pleasure, irritable mood
    - > Physical Symptoms: Abnormal appetite, abnormal sleep, fatigue, loss of energy, agitation or slowing
    - > Cognitive Symptoms: Abnormal self reproach or inappropriate guilt, poor concentration, abnormal morbid thoughts of death or suicide
  - SAD(seasonal affective disorder):
    - > Often progresses to Major Depression
  - Post Partum Depression: Often psychotic symptoms present, may progress to Major Depression
  - Reactive(situational): Still needs treatment
- Q: Major Depression is most often co morbid with what other diagnosis?**

**Q:** What separates normal extreme behaviour from mental illness?

**A:** Loss of life function.

**Q:** What mental illness has the poorest prognosis and outcome?

**A:** Schizophrenia

**Q:** What is the most common positive symptom experienced in schizophrenia?

**A:** Hearing voices (auditory hallucination)

**Q:** Bipolar disorder is often complicated by other illness. What is the most common co morbid condition?

**A:** Drug and Alcohol addiction

**Q:** What type of bipolar disorder has the highest risk of suicide?

**A:** Mixed Bipolar Disorder – because it combines symptoms of severe depression with agitation and increased energy allowing people to act on suicidal thoughts

**Q:** Major depression is often co morbid with what other diagnosis?

**A:** Anxiety Disorders

# Treatment of Mental Illness

*“Patient Insight and Compliance are key to recovery and relapse prevention”*

*“The ultimate goal is always recovery of patient life function”*

# Schizophrenia Spectrum

- Antipsychotics: Main stay of treatment are antipsychotics.
  - > *Typical* Anti psychotics - older drugs, less used today, side effect profile poorly tolerated
  - > *Atypical* Anti psychotics – better tolerated, good for both positive and negative symptoms, most common side effect limiting use is weight gain
    - Trade names of commonly used drugs:  
Abilify, Zyprexa, Seroquel, Risperidol
- Other Drugs used: Anti-depressants, mood stabilizers, anti-anxiety meds
- ECT(electroconvulsive therapy): used more for mood symptoms but used commonly in treatment resistant cases
- Psychosocial: Case management, Education, Stress management, group therapy, etc...
- Occupational: Focused on obtaining life skills

# Bipolar Disorder

- Acute Mania: Atypical Antipsychotics, Lithium, Carbamazapine, Valproate
- Depression: Antidepressants, Antipsychotics, Lamotrigine, Lithium
- Maintenance: All of the above, Psychotherapy, Antianxiolytics(anti-anxiety meds)

*Mood Stabilizers is the common name for medications used in the treatment of Mood disorders (Mania & Depression), but they are essentially the same medications used in the treatment of all mental illness. Eg. Atypical anti-psychotics are called Anti psychotics when treating Psychosis (Schizophrenia) but called Mood stabilizers when treating Bipolar disorder and Depression.*

# Major Depression

- **Traditional Anti-depressants are the main stay of treatment**
  - > SRI's (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors) -*first* line agents for depression and anxiety symptoms  
Prozac, Paxil, Luvox, Celexa, Cipralex, Zoloft
  - > SNRI's (serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors) –*second* line agent for depression and anxiety symptoms, also used for chronic pain  
Effexor, Cymbalta, Pristiq
- **Antipsychotics/Mood Stabilizers**
  - > Abilify, Zyprexa, Seroquel, Risperidol
  - > Lithium, Carbamazepine, Valproate, Lamotrigine
- **ECT: Very effective for treatment resistant depression**
- **Psychotherapy therapy...CBT, Interpersonal Therapy, Problem solving therapy**