

Bipolar Illness and Anxiety: The Scope of the Problem

Rif S. El-Mallakh, MD

Mood Disorders Research Program

University of Louisville School of Medicine

Louisville, Kentucky

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Comorbid Anxiety

- Anxiety coexisting with bipolar illness is common
- In the National Comorbidity Survey Studies some form of anxiety is present in 86.7 – 92% of people with type I bipolar illness

Merikangas KR, et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 64(5):543-552, 2007
Kessler RS, et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 51:8-19, 1994
Kessler RS, et al. *Psychological Med* 27:1079-1089

Anxiety In Children with Bipolar

- Mean number of anxiety syndromes/child=2
 - Separation Anxiety = 44%
 - Overanxious Disorder = 43%
 - Agoraphobia = 28%
 - Social Phobia = 26%
 - Simple Phobia = 23%
 - OCD = 15%
 - Panic Disorder = 14%
 - PTSD = 12%
- All are from a clinical sample

Panic Disorder

- In the Epidemiologic Catchment Area (ECA) study, 21% of all Bipolar subjects had Panic Disorder
- This is 26 times (26,000%) higher than general population
- In genetic studies of comorbid bipolar I and panic, siblings without bipolar disorder do NOT have panic, meaning that panic and bipolar are 'inherited' together

OCD

- In ECA study, 21% had OCD
- In National Comorbidity Survey, 16.6% had OCD
- In both studies, OCD is 10 fold (1000%) more common than in general population

GAD

- In the National Comorbidity Survey 29.6% of all Bipolar Patients had GAD
- In type I bipolar disorder, the rate is 38.7%
- That is 6.1 fold (6100%) and 9.4 fold (9400%) more than the general population
- In children with bipolar I the rate was 41.9%

Merikangas KR, et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 64(5):543-552, 2007

Henin A, et al. *Biol Psychiatry* 58:554-561, 2005

Dickstein DP, et al. *J Child Adolesc Psychopharmacol* 15:534-548, 2005

PTSD

- Rates of PTSD ranging between 16 – 39% in the National Comorbidity Surveys
- This is 6.6 fold (6600%) more than general population
- Women nearly twice as likely to have PTSD than men (20.9 vs. 10.6% in the STEP-BD)

Merikangas KR, et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 64(5):543-552, 2007

Otto MW, et al. *Bipolar Disord* 6:470-479, 2004

Baldassano CF, et al. *Bipolar Disord* 7:465-470, 2005

Social Phobia

- 47 – 51.6% of type I bipolar subjects had social phobia in National Comorbidity Studies

Merikangas KR, et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 64(5):543-552, 2007

Kessler RS, et al. *Arch Gen Psychiatry* 51:8-19, 1994

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Treatment Options Limited

- Antidepressants are problematic
- Benzodiazepines are problematic
- Second Generation Antipsychotics
- Alpha Adrenergic Antagonists for PTSD
- Gabapentin and other anticonvulsants (?)
- Psychotherapy