

# Bipolar Disorder in Late Life

Rebecca Lundquist, M.D./ Dhruvil Patel, M.D.  
Program Director, Psychiatry Residency & PGY3 Psychiatry Resident.  
Brooklows-UrityPoint  
4<sup>th</sup> Annual Geriatric Behavioral Health Conference  
Des Moines University  
Des Moines, IA  
October 1, 2020

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# Disclosures

We have no disclosures to be made.

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# Who is in the audience?

Psychiatric Provider?  
Primary Care Provider?  
Other?

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International Society for Bipolar Disorders  
Task Force Definition of OABD

Older-Age Bipolar Disorder  
(OABD) = patients  $\geq 50$  years

A report on older-age bipolar disorder from the International Society for Bipolar Disorders Task Force first published: 10 September 2015 <https://doi.org/10.1111/bip.12231>

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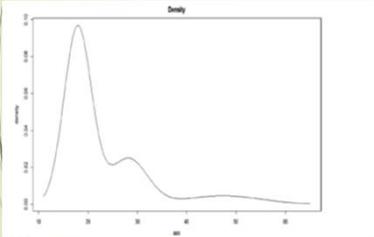
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Age of onset of bipolar disorder



Onset over age 50 is about 5 – 10% of individuals with bipolar disorder.

Behdin et al. 2016

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Age at diagnosis – is it the same disorder?

<p><b>Early Onset BD</b></p> <p><i>New onset mania &lt;50 years</i></p> <p>Family history of affective disorder is common</p>	<p><b>Late Onset BD</b></p> <p><i>New-onset mania &gt;50 years</i></p> <p>Often associated with vascular changes or other brain pathology</p>
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Bipolar Disorders, Volume 17, Issue 7, Pages 689-704, First published: 19 September 2015, DOI: 10.1111/bip.12231

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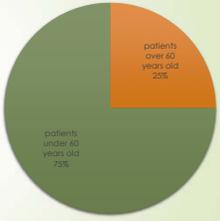
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**As the population ages . . .**

The percent of bipolar patients who are over age 60 grows

- Currently about 25% of patients with bipolar disorder are > 60 years old. By 2030 this will be 50%.



Hecker HC, England P, Dember G, et al. Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication. Arch Gen Psychiatry. 2010;67(10):989-902.  
 Kaplan M, Quirk G, Calabrese J, et al. Maintenance treatment outcomes in older patients with bipolar disorder. Am J Geriatr Psychiatry. 2003;11(10):1300-13.  
 A comprehensive systematic study of the incidence rates and lifetime risk for treated mental disorders. JAMA Psychiatry. 2014;71(12):1278-85.

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**Some more numbers...**

In psychiatric outpatients, prevalence of late-life mania is 0.6 %  
 In psychiatric inpatient units it is 6% .

Patients with bipolar disorder tend to die young.  
 Most cases of OABD ( 70-95%) represent cases with onset age <50

Men with bipolar disorder die younger.  
 Geriatric bipolar patients are predominantly female, 69% women.  
 Younger bipolar adults; ratio of females to males was approximately 1:1.

The epidemiology of psychiatric disorders in Quebec's older adult population. Can J Psychiatry. 2008;53(12):822.  
 The prevalence of late-life mania in older bipolar disorder. Bipolar Disord. 2014;16(2):133-140.  
 Cross-national associations between gender and mental disorders in the World Health Organization World Health Surveys. Arch Gen Psychiatry. 2009;66(7):795.  
 Bipolar disorder in the elderly: different effects of age and of age of onset. J Affect Disord. 2009;114(2):174.  
 Diagnosis and management of bipolar disorder with comorbid anxiety in the elderly. J Clin Psychiatry. 2008;69(suppl 1):21.

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**Bipolar disorder is characterized by episodes of**

- Major depression
- Mania
- Hypomania

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### Is it bipolar disorder?

Bipolar I Disorder

Manic  
Depressed  
Depressed  
Manic  
Depressed  
Depressed

Bipolar II Disorder

Hypomanic  
Depressed  
Depressed  
Hypomanic  
Depressed  
Depressed

The prevalence of misdiagnosis is high (48%-61%) in bipolar disorder. Misclassification decreases with age, but is still substantial.

Bipolar Disorders, Volume 17, Issue 7, Pages 659-704, First published 19 September 2015, DOI: 10.1111/bdi.12320

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### What does mania look like in Old Age Bipolar Disorder (OABD)?

Hyperactivity

Aggression

Insomnia

Cognitive impairment is **more** common

Comorbid general medical illnesses **more** common

Hypersexuality **less** common

Comorbid anxiety and substance use disorders **less** common

Geriatric bipolar disorder. *Psychiatr Clin North Am.* 2011;34(2):319.  
Comorbidity in bipolar disorder among the elderly: results from an epidemiological community sample. *Am J Psychiatry.* 2006;163(2):319.  
Learning and memory in bipolar and unipolar major depression: effects of aging. *Neuropsychiatry Neuropsychol Behav Neurol.* 2000;13(4):246.

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### Differential Diagnosis of OABD

- Unipolar depressive disorder
- Schizoaffective disorder- bipolar type
- Schizophrenia
- Major neurocognitive disorder (dementia)
- Delirium
- Bipolar and related disorder due to another medical condition
- Substance/medication induced bipolar and related disorder
- Substance intoxication

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## Medical causes of mania

<b>Neurologic</b>	<b>Toxic</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dementia</li> <li>• Head injury</li> <li>• CNS tumor</li> <li>• Multiple sclerosis</li> <li>• Stroke</li> <li>• Epilepsy</li> <li>• Wilson's disease</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medications                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corticosteroids</li> <li>• Amphetamines</li> <li>• Other sympathomimetics</li> <li>• L-DOPA</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Other substances</li> </ul>
<b>Infectious</b>	<b>Endocrine</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HIV</li> <li>• Syphilis</li> <li>• Lyme disease</li> <li>• Viral encephalitis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hypo- or hyperthyroidism</li> <li>• Hypercortisolemia</li> </ul>
<b>Sleep Apnea</b>	<b>Vitamin B12 Deficiency</b>

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## Cognitive dysfunction in OABD

Cognitive Dysfunction found in > 30% of people with OABD.

Does BD cause neuroprogression /dementia?  
**CONTROVERSIAL**

Cognitive outcomes are worse in late onset than in early onset bipolar disorder.

Some neurodegenerative diseases (like Frontal-Temporal Dementia) have clinical overlap with OABD, leading to misdiagnosis.

What to do?  
1) Protect from CV risk factors.  
2) Avoid medications that worsen cognition (e.g. benzodiazepines and anticholinergic drugs).

Bipolar Disorders, Volume: 17, Issue: 7, Pages: 689-704, First published: 19 September 2015, DOI: (10.1111/bdi.12331)

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## Medical comorbidities in OABD

Comorbidity	Prevalence (%)
Hypertension	~75%
Metabolic syndrome	~55%
Cardiovascular disease	~50%
Diabetes	~35%
Endocrine...	~25%
Arthritis	~20%
Atopic diseases	~15%
Respiratory illness	~10%

Death occurs an average of 10 years earlier in bipolar patients than in the general population.

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### Cerebrovascular risk in OABD

Silent cerebral infarctions

- present in over 1/2 of patients with OABD

Risk Factors

- Smoking
- Obesity
- Lack of Exercise

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### Treatment of OABD

Drug response in bipolar disorder is variable

- Not everyone responds in the same way to the same drug
- (What works for one person might not work for another)

Medical comorbidity can limit the treatment options for OABD because of

- Drug tolerability
- Drug-drug interactions
- Drug-disease interactions
- Altered metabolism

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Variable Drug Response + ↑Medical Comorbidity = CHALLENGE!

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**FDA approved medication for Management of Acute Mania and Hypomania**

**First line- Lithium, Valproate, Olanzapine, Quetiapine**

Lithium compared with divalproex: the results indicate that the benefit of each drug is substantive and generally comparable.

**Points to remember which one to choose from**

- past response to medications
- psychotic symptoms
- side effect profiles
- comorbid general medical conditions
- potential for drug-drug interactions
- patient preference, and cost

50-80% of older adults with mania will respond to a first-line treatment

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**Lithium**

Start low and go slow in OABD

Baseline monitoring- CBC, CMP, TSH, EKG

Starting dose 150 mg, One to two times daily

- Increase as tolerated every 1-5days. Half life longer in older patients
- Rarely 900mg daily will be required.

Target dose is determined by 12-hour serum trough levels that should be drawn five to seven days after each dose increase.

Serum concentrations, from the International Society for Bipolar Disorders consensus practice guidelines for maintenance treatment in geriatric bipolar disorder and are based upon age :

- Patients 60 to 79 years old – 0.4 to 0.8 mEq/L (0.4 to 0.8 mmol/L)
- Patients 80 years and older – 0.4 to 0.7 mEq/L (0.4 to 0.7 mmol/L)

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**Lithium( Doesn't bind to proteins, Excreted in Kidneys, not metabolized)**

**Effective for**

- Bipolar Mania
- Bipolar Depression
- Bipolar Maintenance Treatment

**Risks/Side effects**

- Nausea/vomiting
- Sedation
- Weight gain
- Tremor
- Hypothyroidism (15%female and 4% male)
- Nephrogenic Diabetes insipidus- Polyuria and Polydipsia – Ultimate renal failure if not treated.
- Bradycardia, AV block – check EKG before starting
- Neurological- Confusion, ataxia, Stupor, Coma and even death in case of toxicity

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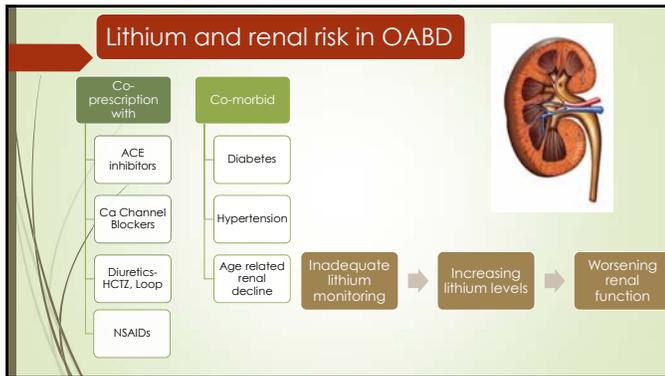
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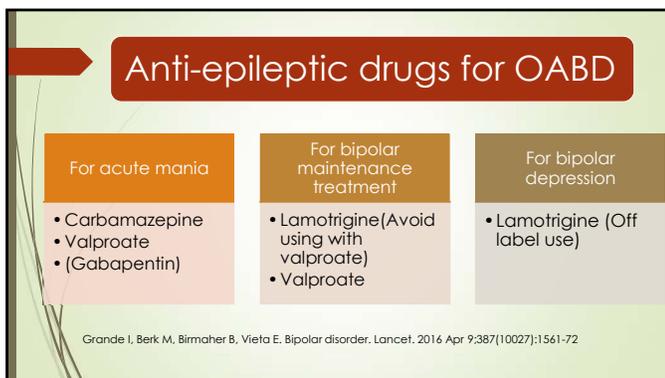
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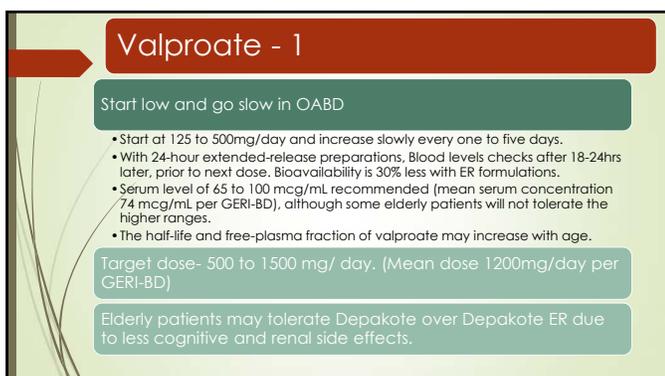
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### Valproate - 2

Baseline monitoring- CBC ( White count and Platelets), BMP, LFTs, Lipase (If suspected acute abdominal pain) and wt.

Common side effects in older geriatric bipolar

- gastrointestinal distress,
- sedation,
- weight gain and hand tremor

Other Side Effects to know-

- Neutropenia,
- Thrombocytopenia,
- Pancreatitis,
- PCOS- Polycystic Ovarian syndrome,
- Elevated LFTs- liver failure if untreated
- hair loss and
- Neural Tube Defect in Pregnancy( Less likely with Elderly)

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### Valproate in OABD (3)

#### Drug-drug interactions

- Aspirin
- Warfarin
- Digoxin
- Phenytoin
- Lamotrigine – valproate decreases clearance

Ammonia levels can become elevated, even with normal valproate levels.

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### Atypical antipsychotics

For acute mania	For bipolar maintenance treatment	For bipolar depression
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Olanzapine</li> <li>• Quetiapine</li> <li>• Aripiprazole</li> <li>• Risperidone</li> <li>• Ziprasidone</li> <li>• Asenapine</li> <li>• Cariprazine ( FDA approved for mixed episodes as well)</li> <li>• (Clozapine – not FDA approved)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aripiprazole</li> <li>• Olanzapine</li> <li>• Risperidone</li> <li>• Quetiapine</li> <li>• Ziprasidone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Olanzapine + fluoxetine</li> <li>• Quetiapine</li> <li>• Lurasidone</li> <li>• Cariprazine</li> </ul>

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### Atypical antipsychotic challenges in OABD

Many carry ↑ risk for metabolic syndrome.

Some carry risk of extrapyramidal or Parkinson-like effects.

Check EKG prior to starting

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### Comparative Efficacy between various agents.

- lithium may be less effective than olanzapine or risperidone for reducing acute mania in patients with bipolar disorder- [Lancet 2011](#)
- lithium might be more effective than lamotrigine and appears similar to carbamazepine and valproate for improving acute mania in patients with bipolar disorder- [Lancet 2011](#)
- valproate appears to have efficacy similar to lithium and olanzapine for improving acute manic episodes in adults with bipolar disorder- [Expert Opin Drug Saf 2017](#);4(7):1103-1109
- oxcarbazepine and valproate may be similarly effective for patients with bipolar disorder- [Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2011 Dec 7\(12\):CD004657](#)
- second-generation antipsychotics may be more effective than mood stabilizers for acute mania- [J Affect Disord 2011 Nov;134\(1-3\):14](#)
- aripiprazole may not be more effective than haloperidol or lithium for patients with acute manic or mixed episodes- [Cochrane Database Syst Rev 2013 Dec 12\(12\):CD009500](#)
- quetiapine and lithium appear similarly effective for improving symptoms, but quetiapine may have greater adverse effects in patients with bipolar I or II disorder- [Lancet Psychiatry 2014](#);3(4):243-252
- antipsychotics such as haloperidol, risperidone, or olanzapine may be more effective than mood stabilizers and anticonvulsants in patients with acute mania- [Lancet Psychiatry 2014](#);3(4):243-252

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### Combination Antipsychotic and Mood Stabilizer

combination of mood stabilizer (lithium or valproate) and second-generation antipsychotic (more evidence for younger patients)

- considered an alternative first-line option to monotherapy with either mood stabilizer or an antipsychotic by Canadian Network for Mood and Anxiety Treatments (CANMAT) and International Society for Bipolar Disorders (ISBD) 2018 recommendations
- may have faster onset of response than monotherapy- [Lancet. 2016 Apr 9;387\(10027\):1561-72.](#)
- may be more effective in reducing symptoms than single agent alone- [Am Fam Physician. 2012 Mar 1;85\(5\):483-93\[full-text\]](#)
- may increase adverse effects ([Expert Opin Drug Saf 2015 Aug;14\(8\):1181](#))
- Can be used for patients with mania who are not adequately improving on lithium or valproate alone. [Aust N Z J Psychiatry 2015 Dec;49\(12\):1215](#)

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**Some Studies with information on combination use.**

- ziprasidone to lithium or divalproex may not be associated with improved response in patients with acute mania. Randomized trial: [Acta Psychiatrica 2014;Nov;216\(11\):1416](#)
- addition of aripiprazole to lithium or valproate may improve mania symptoms. Randomized trial: [Acta Psychiatrica 2016;Oct;218\(10\):1149](#)
- Addition of olanzapine to lithium or valproate may improve symptoms at 6 weeks in manic patients not adequately improving on lithium or valproate alone. Randomized trial: [Acta Psychiatrica 2016;Oct;218\(10\):1149](#)
- Either risperidone or haloperidol may improve short-term response in acute mania when added to mood stabilizer (lithium or valproate). Randomized trial: [Acta Psychiatrica 2009;Jul;219\(7\):1146](#)
- olanzapine plus divalproex appears more effective than divalproex alone for reduction of manic and depressive symptoms in patients with bipolar I disorder with mixed episodes. Randomized Trial: [Acta Psychiatrica 2009;Nov;220\(11\):1534](#)

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**Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT)**

Can be an excellent option for OABD



<https://youtu.be/-T0mwzXHgvI> ( can stop at 1:12min.)

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**Psychosocial interventions**



Helping Older People Experience Success (HOPES)

Skills training and health management training

Improved social skills  
community functioning  
self-efficacy  
leisure recreation

Medication adherence skills training (MAST-BD)

Improved medication adherence  
depression  
quality of life indices

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**Take home points**

National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) 2020 recommendations for use of psychotropic medication in patients ≥ 65 years old, consider

- lower doses of medications
- increased risk of drug interactions
- Assessing and managing comorbidities
- increased risk of detriment to cognitive function and mobility with anticholinergic medication or drugs with anticholinergic mechanisms

Patients > 60 years old may be more likely to have rapid cycling, fewer suicide attempts, and less manic and psychotic symptoms

Remember: antipsychotics are associated with increased risk of stroke, and greater rate of cognitive decline and mortality in patients with dementia

Caution while using antipsychotics due to risk of exacerbating or causing SIAD or Hyponatremia

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