

## What Is Cyclothymia?

Cyclothymia (or cyclothymic disorder) is a mood disorder in which the ups and downs of Bipolar Disorder are observed, but to a much lower severity than what is experienced by a person with a Bipolar Disorder diagnosis. In cases of Cyclothymia, these symptoms have lasted for a period of at least two years, with no period longer than 2 months in which they have been absent.

The age of onset of Cyclothymia is generally in early adulthood, and is gradual. The alternating ups and downs may fluctuate in hours, weeks or months. Because the mood changes aren't as severe as those seen in bipolar disorder, individuals with cyclothymic disorder are not usually as disabled as those suffering from bipolar disorder.

Treatment for Cyclothymia consists of the use of medications with adjunct psychotherapy to help the person adjust to the disorder, reduce the impacts of the disorder on the person's life, and improve his or her coping skills. It also assists clients to more effectively deal with daily activities such as social, relationship, and occupational functions.

Cyclothymia can be distressing to the individual, and to those who live, work, or are in relationships with him or her. However, the condition can be treated and life can be better. The first step is to talk with your family physician about your symptoms, then make an appointment with a qualified therapist. There is hope!