

Fact Sheet On Clinical Management Of Bipolar Disorder In Adult Patients With Mental Retardation And Developmental Disabilities (MR/DD)

1. Bipolar disorder is more common in persons with MR/DD than in the general population.
2. Management of bipolar disorder begins with a careful clinical assessment.
3. Acute psychosis or mania may require antipsychotic therapy that can be tapered over time.
4. Bipolar depression may require antidepressant therapy.
5. Antidepressant therapy can produce mania in a bipolar patient with MR/DD.
6. Clinical data is not available to guide clinicians on which antidepressant has the least risk for producing mania.
7. Chronic therapy with mood stabilizers is indicated for person with MR/DD and recurrent mania.
8. Valproic acid and Lithium are treatments of choice for mood stabilization in persons with bipolar disorder.
9. Second and third generation antipsychotic medications can also stabilize mood in bipolar patients.
10. Combined therapy with mood stabilizers, antidepressants, and antipsychotics may be required for complete stabilization; however, clinicians must monitor carefully for potential medication side effects.