

More Than Just Typical Depression? Understanding Bipolar Depression

(NAPSA)—Have you ever known someone who was sad, struggling for months at a time to perform simple, everyday tasks? Then, for a short period, that same person seemed energetic and able to accomplish multiple activities quickly but soon reverted to their original, saddened state? They may be one of millions of American adults affected by bipolar disorder, a mental illness that can cause extreme mood swings from lows, called bipolar depression, to highs, called bipolar mania.

Bipolar depression is often the primary mood episode for many with bipolar disorder and may sometimes recur more often and last longer than bipolar mania. These depressive symptoms may include prolonged periods of sadness, a loss of interest in activities a person used to enjoy, feelings of worthlessness, concentration difficulties and inner tension. Bipolar depression can also be disruptive and can interfere with a person's ability to handle everyday tasks, such as work or family life. Understanding bipolar depression and how to manage its symptoms is important to encourage proper management and treatment.

Being diagnosed with bipolar depression can be an overwhelming challenge, but it doesn't have to be. Many people with bipolar disorder are able to manage their depressive symptoms and lead a productive, stable life. An accurate diagnosis is the first step in dealing with bipolar disorder. Talking to a doctor about depressive symptoms will help in achieving an accurate diagnosis and designing an appropriate treatment plan. Family and friends are there for support and to help with managing the condition. Additionally, it's very important for those affected by bipolar depression to



The Bipolar Journey traveling health exhibit is visiting cities across America in 2010. The interactive experience is designed to educate and inspire those with bipolar depression.

have access to reliable information and resources. Online resources are a great place to learn more about bipolar depression. One website, www.TalkingAboutBipolar.com, provides visitors with information about bipolar depression, including signs and symptoms and how someone can work with a doctor to find an effective treatment plan. This website also provides information about a support program called *Thinking Forward*, which provides members with free information, resources and practical advice.

AstraZeneca's *Bipolar Journey: Living With Bipolar Depression* traveling health exhibit is another way for those affected by bipolar depression to learn more. This unique resource provides visitors with interactive materials, activities and tools to learn more about bipolar depression. Dr. Janet Taylor, a New York-based psychiatrist in private practice, touts the exhibit's interactive approach, stating that it "can be very effective in motivating patients to find an appropriate treatment plan for their symptoms." If you'd like to learn more about *The Bipolar Journey* or find out if it will be in your neighborhood, please visit <http://www2.prnewswire.com/mnr/astrazeneca/38693>.