



## **Local Experts Reveal Stunning Insights Into Bipolar Disorder and Alcohol Use**

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Largo, FL ? Clean Recovery Centers is a local rehab and mental health facility that recently published an article diving into the link between bipolar disorder and alcohol use. Their treatment team is able to address and treat mental health conditions as well as substance use disorders simultaneously.

?Alcohol use and bipolar disorder are commonly connected, with rates of occurrence being higher than most co-occurring conditions. Both have significant effects on the brain, mood, emotions, and behaviors individually, and when combined, the effects drastically increase. A key characteristic of bipolar disorder is intense mood swings changing between manic highs and depressive lows. Alcohol, as a central nervous system depressant, can worsen these mood fluctuations and intensify overall symptoms.

One study found that 45% of participants diagnosed with bipolar I or II disorder also had a co-occurring alcohol use disorder. However, the results showed that alcohol use increased mood instability and poorer work functioning, but drinking was not caused by increased mood symptoms. This indicates that shifts in mood from bipolar disorder do not necessarily cause the person to turn to alcohol to cope, but rather, the alcohol causes mood and behavioral symptoms to increase. The connection between bipolar disorder and

alcohol use needs further research to understand the true interplay of both,? the article states.

Bipolar disorder involves alternating periods of mania and depression, with episodes lasting for days to weeks at a time, depending on the type. Though mood shifts sometimes stem from a trigger, oftentimes they occur without warning. Alcohol use also causes shifts in mood both in the short-term and long-term. When first consumed, alcohol induces temporary euphoria or relaxation. As drinking continues, irritability, sadness, and emotional instability begin. This is due to alcohol?s effects on decision-making, inhibitions, and cognitive ability. When paired, drinking exacerbates mood swings in those with bipolar disorder.

Anxiety and depressive symptoms frequently accompany both alcohol use and bipolar disorder. Consuming alcohol is often a coping mechanism to manage stress or sadness, but increased feelings of anxiety and depression will be noticeable as alcohol use continues. Those with bipolar disorder can experience worsening depressive episodes or cycle through mania and depression more often while drinking.

?Instead of providing relief, alcohol often amplifies the symptoms of bipolar disorder. Alcohol is a depressant, which can deepen depressive episodes by increasing feelings of hopelessness and guilt. During manic episodes, alcohol fuels reckless behaviors and can cause confrontational interactions, leading to further emotional and social consequences.

By self-medicating with alcohol, the risk of developing an alcohol use disorder significantly increases. When alcohol is consumed frequently, the brain and body begin to acclimate to its presence. Soon, the person will notice it takes more alcohol in order to feel the same effects as before, known as tolerance. As tolerance increases, so does consumption, leading to the body becoming physically dependent. When this happens, the brain sends signals to the body as a way to indicate a need for alcohol. This is where withdrawal symptoms come in, fueling the cycle of continued drinking. Experiencing withdrawal, cravings, and mood shifts between consumption are all tell-tale signs of an alcohol use disorder,? the article continues.

Managing bipolar disorder typically involves a combination of medications, such as mood stabilizers, antipsychotics, and antidepressants. One concern with combining alcohol with these medications is the risk of increased side effects. In some cases, sedative medications are utilized to help with manic episodes and anxiety. When taken with alcohol, both substances cause an increase in sedation, putting the person in danger of experiencing breathing complications. Both alcohol and sedative medications slow the central nervous system, and when breathing stops, permanent damage can occur within the body. It is always best to consult with a medical professional when taking mental health medications and consuming alcohol.

Clean Recovery Centers offers a safe space to heal for those living with substance use disorders, mental health conditions, or both. Their team consists of experts in the fields of addiction and mental health, and they are able to address all concerns at the same time. Their program is flexible and provides a level of care for all

who walk through their doors.

To learn more about Clean Recovery Centers, call (888) 330-2532 or visit their website.

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### **Clean Recovery Centers - Largo**

*Located on the beautiful Suncoast of Florida, Clean Recovery Centers provides the full spectrum of treatment options for drug and alcohol addiction.*

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