

Becoming manic or 'high'

Top tips for coping

These are a list of things that people who have difficulties when they become high or manic have found helpful:

- (i) Try to get some sleep. Going without sleep has been shown to cause manic states and make them last longer.
- (ii) Eat well. Don't go without food or eat high energy food. Eat slowly.
- (iii) Use relaxation techniques.
- (iv) Stay in bed even though you feel compelled to do lots of things.
- (v) Don't act on your ideas. In a few days time you may see things completely differently.
- (vi) Don't buy anything expensive. Some people have found it helpful to give their credit cards/cheque book to friends.
- (vii) Use medication, herbal remedies, or other things that slow you down and/or help you sleep.
- (viii) Take relaxing (rather than high energy) exercise e.g. walking, swimming.
- (ix) Make a plan for each day and keep to it. Don't plan to do too much.
- (x) Try to do things slowly rather than quickly. Talk and walk consciously slower than you feel driven to.
- (xi) Challenge any grandiose ideas you might have about yourself.
- (xii) Reduce any pressures or stresses on you.
- (xiii) Cut out stimulants e.g. coffee, sugar, chocolate, fizzy drinks, alcohol. Some anti-depressants (e.g. the SSRIs like Prozac) can have stimulant-like effects – discuss this with your doctor and consider stopping them.

It may be helpful for you to make a plan about what to do before you get 'high'. You know yourself best, so build as many things into the plan that you feel will help you not do things you may later regret. It may be helpful to draw up a plan, and a list of 'warning signs', with a trusted friend or mental health professional at a time when you are not 'high', but that can be put into place as you or others notice your warning signs.

Some people believe that 'going high' is a response to not thinking about or facing things that might be quite frightening or depressing. It might be helpful to 'get connected' to such things, by talking and thinking about your life and some of the root causes of some unhappiness in your life. You could do this with a trusted friend or mental health professional.

People diagnosed as Bipolar often identify stress as one of the main factors leading to them going high – find out what stresses you and try and reduce the causes of this stress.