

# PATIENT EDUCATION HANDOUT

## Borderline Personality Disorder

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Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) is a mental disease where people do things without thinking, have difficult relationships, and their mood changes a lot. In BPD, mood changes can be fast and can change in the same day. This is different from bipolar disorder where mood changes can last weeks or months. Early diagnosis and treatment mean recognizing troubling symptoms and talking with your physician about your worries. A diagnosis of BPD is often treated with therapy and medications. While these treatments are helpful, there are many things that you can do to help manage symptoms yourself.

### HEALTHY COPING MECHANISMS FOR DEALING WITH BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

- Exercise that gets your heart rate up should be treated as medicine to be taken every day. Exercise not only reduces weight gain but has also been found to lower stress and help keep your moods from changing.
- Keep a journal. Write down what makes your symptoms worse. Note things like arguments, stressful at work, and traumatic life events are common risk factors.
- Unfortunately, unexpected events such as a sudden death in the family can't be avoided. These hard situations are best handled by reaching out for help through therapy or close family and friends. Those with BPD often need more support than others in trying times, and it is a good idea to have a trusted therapist on speed dial.
- If you find yourself experiencing a strong feeling, like anger, allow yourself to feel it, but don't act on it.
- Avoid working night shifts or irregular hours, if possible. An irregular sleep schedule can be a trigger of BPD, and a routine schedule helps.
- Stay away from drugs, smoking, and alcohol. These substances can make your BPD symptoms start. However, DO take the medications prescribed to you by your physician, and report any symptoms, such as suicidal thoughts, as soon as possible.
- Keep safe! Don't keep guns in the house and get rid of any medicine that you no longer take. Have an action plan in place to get help if you feel suicidal.

### SUICIDE PREVENTION

Unfortunately, death is high in those with BPD. If you find yourself having suicidal thoughts, don't hesitate to call the suicide hotline: **1-800-273-8255**. You are not alone.



SOURCE(S): National Alliance on Mental Illness, National Institute of Mental Health, & Up-To-Date

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