Among People With Bipolar Disorder, Being Female Is Linked to Antidepressant Exposure

Being female is also linked to antidepressant-induced mania.

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Doctors sometimes prescribe antidepressants to treat symptoms of depression in folks living with bipolar disorder, a mental illness that causes dramatic shifts in mood, energy and the ability to think clearly. Now, new findings published in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry have identified being female as a risk factor linked to antidepressant usage as well as to the development of antidepressant-induced mania (AIM) among people with bipolar disorder, reports Healio.

For the study, researchers evaluated 426 participants suffering from either bipolar I disorder, bipolar II disorder, other bipolar disorder or schizoaffective disorder.

Scientists examined demographic, socioeconomic and clinical factors in relation to antidepressant exposure in bipolar disorder and identified which patients with the illness were more likely to have a history of AIM as a result of antidepressant use.

Findings showed that among patients with bipolar disorder, women, older adults and folks suffering from chronic diseases were more likely to have been exposed to antidepressants. Women were nearly four times as likely to have a history of AIM than men (being white was found to have an association with antidepressant use but to a lesser extent).

In addition, researchers found that patients with bipolar disorder who used antidepressants suffered from depressive episodes at an earlier age, experienced more episodes of depression and more hypomanic incidents over their lifetimes, and were more likely to attempt suicide.

“While these data cannot predict with precision which patients will or will not develop AIM on an individual basis, our results support the consideration of sex in the design of studies targeted toward AIM, the development of clinical prediction tools for AIM, and for potential efforts to prevent this adverse outcome,” noted study authors.

Click here to read about a celebrity who recently revealed she’s been living with bipolar disorder for almost two decades.

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