

## Impulsivity in Adolescents with Bipolar Disorder

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### Introduction

Impulsivity refers to a predisposition toward rapid and unplanned reactions to internal or external stimuli, without regard to the negative consequences. It is recognized to be a contributing factor to the high rate of substance abuse and suicide risk in bipolar patients.

It is one of the most frequent typical symptoms in bipolar adolescents.

### Objectives

The aim of this study was to examine aspects of impulsivity in adolescents with bipolar disorders

### Methods

We assessed impulsivity in 30 euthymic adolescents with bipolar disorder and we evaluated its association with the following clinic characteristics: suicide attempts, childhood trauma history and substance use history. Impulsivity and childhood trauma history were respectively assessed using the Barratt Impulsiveness Scale (BIS-10), and Childhood Trauma Questionnaire (CTQ) in validated Arabic versions. Patients were compared with 30 age and gender matched healthy controls.

### Results

The total impulsivity scores as well as subscores of motor and cognitive impulsivity in subjects with bipolar disorder were higher than in control subjects. There was a statistically significant difference between bipolar adolescent and controls regarding the CTQ total.

### Conclusion

Our findings suggest that trait impulsivity is increased among adolescents with mood disorders and is associated with traumatic events in childhood. Therefore the dimension of impulsive aggression and childhood trauma should be systematically assessed in mood disorder patients to address the risk of suicide and addictive behavior.