

# Substance-Induced Bipolar Disorder

When the Substance Creates the Mood Disorder Driving Relapse



## What is Substance-Induced Bipolar Disorder?

**Substance-Induced Bipolar Disorder** is a mood condition where alcohol, drugs, or medications directly cause manic highs, depressive lows, or both. Unlike independent bipolar disorder, these mood episodes only appear during substance use or withdrawal, but repeated exposure can make the damage permanent.

## What Does it Look Like?

- **Depressive Crashes in Withdrawal**  
Grandiosity, impulsivity, and sleeplessness that appear during active use.
- **Impulsive Behavior During Highs**  
Deep hopelessness, fatigue, and shutdown that follow each period of use.
- **Rapid Mood Cycling**  
Dramatic swings between euphoria and despair tied to use patterns.
- **Diagnostic Confusion**  
Mood symptoms look identical to bipolar, making accurate diagnosis difficult.

## How Does It Contribute to Relapse?

When substance use creates the very mood instability it's used to escape, each relapse deepens the neurological damage and moves closer to a permanent disorder.

- 1) **Each Relapse Recreates the Mood Disorder**  
Returning to substances restarts the entire cycle.
- 2) **Misdiagnosis Leads to Ineffective Treatment**  
Without sustained sobriety, clinicians treat the wrong condition.
- 3) **Continued Use May Worsen Underlying Bipolar**  
Repeated episodes can reveal a pre-existing vulnerability or accelerate disorder progression.

### **Prevalence:**

**40-60%** of those with alcohol use disorder experience substance-induced mood disturbances<sup>1</sup>

### **Co-Occurrence:**

**32.2%** of substance-induced psychosis cases later convert to bipolar or schizophrenia spectrum disorders<sup>2</sup>

### **Disorder Escalation**

**Significant** increased risk of developing independent bipolar disorder<sup>3</sup>

*Sources: <sup>1</sup>Revadigar & Gupta, StatPearls (2022). Substance-Induced Mood Disorders <sup>2</sup>Starzer et al., American Journal of Psychiatry (2018) <sup>3</sup>Tolliver & Anton, Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience (2015)*

# Long-Term Treatment for Substance-Induced Bipolar Disorder

Distinguishing substance-induced from independent bipolar requires sustained sobriety under clinical observation, something no 30-day program can provide.

Our **long-term, progress-based model** provides the time and structure to reach an accurate diagnosis while building skills to manage mood without substances. Clients advance through demonstrated stability.



*“Accurate diagnosis requires something no short-term program can provide: enough time in sustained sobriety to see whether the bipolar symptoms resolve or persist. That distinction changes everything about treatment.”*



 **Meghan Bohlman, LPC-S, LCDC, EMDR-Trained**  
Executive Clinical Director, Burning Tree Ranch

# Dual Diagnosis Treatment for Substance-Induced Bipolar Disorder

Without recognizing substance-induced bipolar, treatment addresses mood symptoms while the substance use creating them continues unchecked.

- **Achieving Accurate Diagnosis**  
Clinical observation during sustained sobriety reveals the true source.
- **Stabilizing Mood Without Substances**  
Building coping skills that replace substance use.
- **Providing Enough Time for Clarity**  
Months of sobriety separate substance-induced from independent bipolar.

## Dual Diagnosis:

The presence of **both a substance use disorder and a mental health condition** occurring together. Effective treatment for dual-diagnosis addictions must address both aspects simultaneously.



## Have Other Treatment Programs Missed the Deeper Issues?

Burning Tree Ranch is the Nation's only authentic long-term treatment program for chronic relapse. Call us at (866) 287-2877 or visit us online at [www.BurningTree.com](http://www.BurningTree.com).

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