

Smartphone app may be beneficial for some with bipolar disorder

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A smartphone-based self-management app does not reduce the risk of

relapse among patients with bipolar disorder, but can reduce relapse risk and manic symptom severity for low-risk individuals, according to a study published online Dec. 21 in *JAMA Psychiatry*.

Evan H. Goulding, M.D., Ph.D., from the Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine in Chicago, and colleagues examined whether a smartphone-based self-management [intervention](#) (LiveWell) can assist individuals with [bipolar disorder](#) to maintain wellness. A total of 205 participants with bipolar disorder were randomly assigned to usual care or usual care plus the smartphone-based intervention. Intervention participants had a coach visit, followed by six phone calls over 16 weeks, and they completed daily and weekly check-ins on the app. Adoptive feedback and information for developing a personalized wellness plan was provided by the app, while the coach provided support and the website provided summary data and alerts.

The researchers observed no significant reduction in [relapse](#) risk with the smartphone intervention. However, reduced risk of relapse was seen for low-risk individuals, but not for high-risk individuals. For low-risk, but not high-risk, individuals, manic symptom severity was reduced. Depressive symptom severity was reduced with the smartphone-based self-management intervention, and relational quality of life was improved, but no decrease was seen in the percentage time symptomatic.

"The results of this trial warrant further work to optimize the smartphone intervention and confirm that the intervention decreases relapse risk for individuals in asymptomatic recovery," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the pharmaceutical, technology, and publishing industries.

More information: Evan H. Goulding et al, Effects of a Smartphone-Based Self-management Intervention for Individuals With Bipolar

Disorder on Relapse, Symptom Burden, and Quality of Life, *JAMA Psychiatry* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2022.4304](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapsychiatry.2022.4304)

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