

# Meeting at-risk criteria increases risk for transition to bipolar disorder

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Patients meeting bipolar at-risk (BAR) criteria are significantly more

likely to transition to bipolar disorder (BD) during the next decade versus patients seeking mental health care not meeting the BAR criteria, according to a study published online Sept. 15 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Aswin Ratheesh, M.D., Ph.D., from Orygen in Parkville, Australia, and colleagues examined the association of BAR criteria with onset of BD during 10 to 13 years of follow-up. The analysis included 60 consenting people (15 to 25 years) seeking help for nonpsychotic major mental health difficulties, including mood, personality, and [substance use disorders](#). Individuals were originally recruited from a tertiary youth mental health setting (May 1, 2008, to Sept. 30, 2010).

The researchers found that just under half of participants (28 individuals) met BAR criteria. Of those meeting BAR criteria, 28.6 percent developed BD during a mean 11.1 years of follow-up. No patients not meeting BAR criteria developed BD. The risk for developing BD was higher in the BAR group versus the non-BAR group. During follow-up, the proportions of transitions to BD were equal in the first and second halves.

"The findings suggest that those meeting BAR criteria may benefit from longer-term monitoring and support," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to industry.

**More information:** Aswin Ratheesh et al, Bipolar At-Risk Criteria and Risk of Bipolar Disorder Over 10 or More Years, *JAMA Network Open* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.34078](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2023.34078)

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