



DOCTOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

# Managing Borderline Personality Disorder

The better you understand borderline personality disorder (BPD), the better equipped you'll be to manage your condition. Asking the right questions during your conversation will help you know what to expect and how to better navigate your condition. Familiarize yourself with these common terms before your appointment to help facilitate your discussion.

## Vocabulary to Know

Your doctor might mention these common terms. Here's what they mean.

<b>Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)</b>	A type of therapy that may be used with people who have BPD. It identifies and changes core beliefs and behaviors that underlie inaccurate perceptions. CBT may reduce mood and anxiety symptoms and may reduce self-harming behavior.
<b>Dialectical behavior therapy (DBT)</b>	A type of therapy that was developed for people with BPD. DBT helps control intense emotions, reduce self-destructive behavior, and improve relationships. Skills are usually taught in a group setting.
<b>Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5)</b>	A handbook used by physicians and mental health professionals to assess and diagnose mental health issues. A doctor will use the DSM-5 to diagnose borderline personality disorder.
<b>Personality disorder</b>	A deeply ingrained, maladaptive pattern of behavior that causes distress and typically affects an individual's relationships and ability to function well.
<b>Self-harm</b>	Self-harm is sometimes referred to as self-injury. It refers to deliberate acts of harming one's body, such as cutting or burning, which sometimes occurs in individuals with borderline personality disorder.
<b>Mania</b>	Mania is characterized by periods of great excitement, over-activity, and euphoria. It may also involve racing thoughts, extreme behavior, and irritable mood. Manic episodes occur in bipolar I.



### Questions to Ask

These questions will help you start a conversation with your doctor about how to best manage borderline personality disorder.

#### About Symptoms

- How long have I likely had BPD?
- How does BPD affect my relationships?
- Should I bring someone to my appointment with me who can describe the symptoms they observe?
- Will my symptoms likely come back from time to time?

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#### About Causes & Risk Factors

- What are the main risk factors for developing BPD?
- Does it put me at risk for having other mental health or physical health issues?
- Does my childhood likely have anything to do with BPD?
- Could my other health issues or mental health conditions contribute to BPD?

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#### About Diagnosis

- How is BPD diagnosed? Is there a test for me to take and what can I expect during it?
- How do you rule out other possible conditions that have similar symptoms to BPD?
- Do I have any other mental illnesses?

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#### About Treatment

- Are there any medications that can help reduce my symptoms? Which might be right for me?
- Should I see a therapist? If so, what kind of therapy?
- How much improvement can I expect to see from treatment?
- Will it ever be OK to stop treatment?
- Does BPD ever go away altogether?

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