

“Blue-Blocking” Glasses May Help Treat Bipolar Disorder, Insomnia and Depression

August 3, 2016

Wearing amber-tinted glasses that block blue light from electronic devices at night may help significantly ease the symptoms of bipolar disorder, depression and insomnia, according to recent findings published in the journal *Bipolar Disorders*. The paper builds on a growing body of research showing just how important light is for controlling human sleep cycles and maintaining other aspects of our physical and mental health, [Newsweek reports](#).

According to researchers, the orange shades block blue light, a major component of sunlight, which our bodies have used for thousands of years to adjust our biological clock and sleep cycles. But many modern-day electronic devices, such as smartphones, televisions and computers, also emit blue light. Previous studies showed this type of light can seriously disrupt sleep cycles and may contribute to mental illness.

For this study, scientists in Norway selected a sample of 23 patients living with bipolar disorder. Twelve subjects were assigned to wear “blue-blocking” glasses each night for a week, while 11 were not. No other changes were made to the patient’s medication regimens. By the end of the trial period, those in the experimental group scored, on average, 14 points lower on a test called the Young Mania Rating Scale, designed to measure manic symptoms of the disorder.

According to a commentary published along with the study, improvements were noticeable after just three nights of wearing the glasses. In addition, results of using the blue-light-blocking devices were more than twice what researchers considered to be a “clinically significant difference” in subjects’ mental health treatment. Study authors also noted that even drug treatments aren’t typically known to lead to such quick and significant turnarounds for people living with bipolar disorder.

Though research on amber-tinted lenses has been limited thus far, findings show that blocking blue light may trick the brain into thinking it’s dark. Darkness prompts the brain’s pineal gland to produce melatonin, a hormone that helps promote sleep. Researchers think several mental illnesses, including bipolar disorder, may be partially linked to or aggravated by too much light or

irregular cycles of light and dark.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the effects of light on mental health.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/blueblocking-glasses-may-help-treat-bipolar-disorder-insomnia-depression>