

HCL-32 Hypomania Checklist

A fine-tooth comb for the manic side of the mood spectrum, not a yes-or-no test for bipolar disorder.

Everyone has swings in energy, activity, and mood. This asks only about the **high** periods, and what they look like for you. No right answers, no trick questions. Answer for how you are **in general**, not just today, and bring the finished page to your visit.

QUESTION 1

How are you feeling today, compared to your usual state?

- ☐ Much worse than usual ☐ Worse than usual
- ☐ A little worse than usual ☐ Neither better nor worse than usual
- ☐ A little better than usual ☐ Better than usual
- ☐ Much better than usual

QUESTION 2

Compared to other people, my level of activity, energy, and mood...

Not how you feel today, but how you are on average.

- ☐ is always rather stable and even ☐ is generally higher
- ☐ is generally lower ☐ repeatedly shows periods of ups and downs

Question 3. Remember a “high” period when you were not using drugs or alcohol. In that state, check each statement that is true of you:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 ☐ I need less sleep | 17 ☐ I am more flirtatious and/or am more sexually active |
| 2 ☐ I feel more energetic and more active | 18 ☐ I talk more |
| 3 ☐ I am more self-confident | 19 ☐ I think faster |
| 4 ☐ I enjoy my work more | 20 ☐ I make more jokes or puns when I am talking |
| 5 ☐ I am more sociable (make more phone calls, go out more) | 21 ☐ I am more easily distracted |
| 6 ☐ I want to travel and/or do travel more | 22 ☐ I engage in lots of new things |
| 7 ☐ I tend to drive faster or take more risks when driving | 23 ☐ My thoughts jump from topic to topic |
| 8 ☐ I spend more money / too much money | 24 ☐ I do things more quickly and/or more easily |
| 9 ☐ I take more risks in my daily life (in my work and/or other activities) | 25 ☐ I am more impatient and/or get irritable more easily |
| 10 ☐ I am physically more active (sport etc.) | 26 ☐ I can be exhausting or irritating for others |
| 11 ☐ I plan more activities or projects | 27 ☐ I get into more quarrels |
| 12 ☐ I have more ideas, I am more creative | 28 ☐ My mood is higher, more optimistic |
| 13 ☐ I am less shy or inhibited | 29 ☐ I drink more coffee |
| 14 ☐ I wear more colorful and more extravagant clothes / make-up | 30 ☐ I smoke more cigarettes |
| 15 ☐ I want to meet or actually do meet more people | 31 ☐ I drink more alcohol |
| 16 ☐ I am more interested in sex, and/or have increased sexual desire | 32 ☐ I take more drugs (sedatives, anti-anxiety pills, stimulants) |

IF YOU CHECKED SEVERAL BOXES, THESE MATTER JUST AS MUCH

The number of symptoms matters far less than how long the highs last, what they cost you, and what the people around you noticed.

How long do they usually last? When was the most recent one? What do people close to you say? How much of the past year?

WHAT THE NUMBER OF CHECKS MEANS

14 or more

The threshold from the original study. Worth a careful conversation about hypomania, but it is not a diagnosis, and never has been.

Fewer than 14

Makes hypomania less likely without ruling it out, especially alongside a family history of bipolar disorder, or depressions that began young.

At this threshold it caught about 4 of every 5 people with bipolar II, but flagged half of those with ordinary unipolar depression too. It over-calls on purpose.

NOT “AM I BIPOLAR?” BUT “HOW BIPOLAR AM I?”

Mood sits on a spectrum, and this checklist measures only one end of it. In the Harvard bipolar clinic’s Bipolarity Index, hypomania and mania account for at most about **one fifth** of the score.

The other four fifths come from what this page never asks: family history, how old you were when the depressions began, how they have behaved since, and how you responded to medications. A high score with none of those is a very different picture from a moderate score with all of them.

Source. Angst J, et al. *The HCL-32: towards a self-assessment tool for hypomanic symptoms in outpatients.* J Affect Disord 2005; PMID 16125784. This office version condenses the checklist; the full form adds items on how the highs affect your life, how others react, and how much of the last year you spent in one. Print it at moodtreatmentcenter.com/hcl32. Spectrum framing adapted from psycheducation.org.

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