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Transdiagnostic treatment of bipolar disorder and comorbid anxiety using the Unified Protocol for  
Emotional Disorders: A pilot feasibility and acceptability trial

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### Abstract

#### *Background*

Comorbid anxiety in bipolar disorder (BD) is associated with greater illness severity, reduced treatment response, and greater impairment. Treating anxiety in the context of BD is crucial for improving illness course and outcomes. The current study examined the feasibility, acceptability and preliminary efficacy of the Unified Protocol (UP), a transdiagnostic cognitive behavioral therapy, as an adjunctive treatment to pharmacotherapy for BD and comorbid anxiety disorders.

#### *Methods*

Twenty-nine patients with BD and at least one comorbid anxiety disorder were randomized to pharmacotherapy treatment-as-usual (TAU) or TAU with 18 sessions of the UP (UP+TAU). All patients completed assessments every four weeks to track symptoms, functioning, emotion regulation and

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