



# Depression

## *And Its*

# Natural Cures

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It may be called "the blues" or chronic "I just don't feel like it", by any name depression affects one in every four people in America, and it's wide band of mild to debilitating symptoms affect youth, teens, and adults alike. With antidepressants as the number one prescribed drug, and their common side-effects of apathy and suicidal tendencies on the rise, perhaps we need a better understanding of depression, what causes it, and what are its natural preventions and cures.

It's sometimes difficult to recognize at first, as depression manifests in a number of ways. Common symptoms include feeling hopeless, sad, or self-doubting. Many individuals experience withdrawing from friends and family, self isolating, and diminished motivation. Recognizing if there is a need to help yourself or someone you love - understanding is the first step on the road to hope and happiness.

Ideally, the brain operates with a healthy balance of neurotransmitters - bio-chemicals such as serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine which transmit messages within the brain and to other parts of the body. They're responsible for eliciting positive emotions and physical sensation as well as determining perceptions of the world. Depression is characterized or caused by an imbalance of neurotransmitters, which alters perception, and trickles down from the brain to the pineal and thyroid glands, both of which interpret perception and determine how to act on it. If prior to depression it could be said that you were looking through rose colored glasses, you may now be looking through glasses darkly. In addition to altered perception, a depressed individual often suffers fatigue and chronic pain, such as headaches and back pain.

## Signs & Symptoms

When neurotransmitters become imbalanced, the individual is less capable of dealing effectively with the challenges of daily life. Eventually a depressed person may become overwhelmed and wish to give up on life. Here are some signs and symptoms of its onset:

- Irritability
- Loss of interest in previously enjoyed activities, including time with family and friends, work and sex
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness, sadness or emptiness
- Excessive crying
- Loss of energy or feeling perpetually fatigued

- Chronic aches and pains that don't respond to therapy
- Obsession with or lack of interest in food
- Pronounced weight gain or weight loss
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Decreased productivity
- Absenteeism from work, school, or other responsibilities
- Inability to cooperate, concentrate, or make decisions
- Changes in sleep patterns, including insomnia, waking too early or oversleeping
- Prolonged melancholy and thoughts of death or suicide

Although depression is a serious condition, it can be completely reversed. The first step in overcoming the challenges of depression is realizing it's an imbalance, not a weakness. In severe cases where depression has progressed into severe insomnia or suicidal thoughts, antidepressant medication may be best until natural therapies can take effect. In mild to moderate cases, and often in conjunction with prescription drugs, complimentary therapies, such as herbal remedies and nutrients can offer relief from symptoms such as headaches, loss of concentration, fatigue, sleeplessness, chronic neck pain, and sexual dysfunction. Herbal alternatives can offer hope, especially for those who suffer the effects of antidepressants, such as dry mouth, headaches, loss of sex drive, insomnia, and dulled or flattened response.

## Antidepressant Drugs

Antidepressant drugs are widely prescribed and abused, by both doctors and patients. Often prescribed without a complete examination and workup to eliminate underlying physical disorders (such as food allergy, drug reaction, hypoglycemia, or lack of natural light) that may cause depression, drug treatment of depression masks its symptoms, without addressing the underlying cause, and leaves the original condition to further degenerate and worsen. Common side-effects of antidepressant drugs are: constipation, blurred vision, dizziness, headaches, dry mouth, weight gain, impotence, anxiety, nervousness, nausea, diarrhea, sexual dysfunction, and suicidal and homicidal tendencies.

## Herbal Alternatives



A combination of medicinal plants, flowers, and seeds may be more effective than anti-depressant drugs. Herbs can bring about positive changes in brain chemistry and neuro-transmitters, restoring hope, elevating mood, allowing you to see yourself in a positive future, and feel in a safe place. The powerful medicinal botanicals in the Rescue Formula HOPE have been known and used effectively for centuries as the number one choice for depression. *DO NOT combine with Rx drugs.*

In the U.S., Prozac is among the most commonly prescribed drug. In Europe, however, doctors turn to herbal remedies rather than harsh chemicals. In Germany alone doctors wrote 3.2 million prescriptions for 900 mg/day of the herb St. John's wort (*hypericum perforatum*) in 2013 - a 20 to 1 deference over Prozac, Paxil, or Zoloft for depression, and other anti-anxiety medications, without the harmful side effects. While many Americans

have relied on antidepressants to protect them from stress, St. John's wort, Kava-Kava, Passion flower, Lemon balm, Noni, and Valerian have been used with success, and without side-effects, for centuries in other countries in Europe, Asia, northern Africa, and South America.

While deemed as new discoveries in the U.S., herbal remedies have become more widely used, and even preferred over drugs in the therapy of healing depression, anxiety, insomnia, and panic attacks.

## Kava-Kava



Kava-Kava root (*piper methysticum*) is mildly sedative, while keeping the brain alert and its medicinal properties repair damage to the bladder, relax nervous or spasmodic bladder, calm anxiety and panic, improve sexuality, and enhance fertility. It has been used extensively throughout the south Pacific; the juice of its pressed leaves are intoxicating and often used in ceremony to strengthen the continuity of social harmony and to attain shared vision, and its boiled root used traditionally for insomnia, to eliminate urinary infection, to mitigate nervous tension, and to correct menopausal symptoms.

Dosages range from 30 to 210 mg per day, with its active constituents known as *pyrones* having effectiveness comparable to the class of drugs known as benzodiazepines, but without the side effects of physical or psychological dependency. Abuse of Kava, like other sedative agents, can lead to yellow discoloration of skin, nails, and hair, liver damage, and disturbances of equilibrium.

**Drug Interactions:** Do not combine with substances that cause drowsiness such as alcohol, barbiturates (including Phenobarbital), anti-psychotic drugs (such as Haldol) and anti-anxiety drugs (such as Valium, Xanax, or Ativan), as Kava root worsens symptoms that these drugs suppress. Kava also decreases the effectiveness of Parkinson's drug Levodopa. Concentrated or long-term uses may injure liver. Do not combine with specific drugs that damage liver such as cholesterol lowering statin drugs. DO NOT use this herb in combination with pharmaceutical antidepressants.

## Lemon Balm



Leaves and stems of the mint family, Lemon Balm, contain agents that scavenge virus throughout the body, and relax the nervous system promoting normal sleep. Lemon balms' medicinal action repairs damage to sinuses and teeth, their roots and nerves - helping to prevent cavities, and heals mucous membranes. For headaches, nervous heart or stomach with indigestion or flatulence, menstrual blues, depressed emotions, and babies with colic, lemon balm comes to the rescue.

It can also inhibit growth of bacteria and fungi, and has been used for over 2,000 years to reduce fevers, calm digestion and spastic gas, relieve disorders of the nervous system, and relaxing upset emotions. It's effective for falling asleep easier when nervous conditions are preventing it, and helps support the female reproductive system by easing tension and cramping during menses.

**Drug Interactions:** none known

## Noni



Also known as Morinda in the tropics, Noni contains natural serotonin and the active agent *xeronine*, a substance that converts proteins into active receptor sites for endorphins to increase serotonin, dopamine, and tryptophan "feel good" hormones of the brain, and helps distribute them to other parts of the body. Many pharmaceutical drugs synthetically simulate the natural serotonin binding abilities of Noni such as: Prozac which is used for depression, and Sumatriptan, used for treatment of migraine headaches and menstrual relief, and Redux used to achieve weight loss.

Noni has been used traditionally in the south Pacific as a panacea for curing illnesses ranging from depression, menstrual problems, cancer, arthritis, rheumatism, and curing addictions. In Raphaology Medicine Noni is used to repair damage to testes and ovaries - as a stimulator and balancer of testosterone and estrogen, providing stable endurance, and to restore hope, release fear, emotional paralysis, and self-destructive feelings.

**Drug Interactions:** Do NOT use with antidepressant drugs

## Passion Flower



Containing the sedative properties of *harnin alkaloids* that alleviate nervous headache pain, calm palpitation or tachycardia of the heart, and aid sleep (especially for those laboring with mental worry or mental overload), Passion flower repairs the solar plexus, calms the stomach, and produces natural sleep without a "drugged" after effect. In addition to relieving insomnia, it may relieve nerve spasm disorders, allay anxiety, and reduce blood pressure. Passion flower helps to get a hold on worried, nervous, or restless emotions, especially if there are troubled feelings about touching or being touched, and have anti-stressing effects with family discord and job worries.

Passion flower has been used by the native people of North, Central, and South America for centuries, and is still prescribed by doctors in Europe as a natural calming agent and relaxant that promotes sleep. Extracts are especially effective with bacteria and fungi and are

relieving with menopausal hot flashes and headaches. Spastic coughs, muscular twitching, and nerve pain are also mitigated with passion flower.

**Drug Interactions:** Reduces effectiveness of pharmaceutical antidepressant drugs

## St. John's Wort



One of the active components of St. John's wort is *hypericin*, which is depression relieving. Its 10 other components, such as the flavonoids proanthocyanidins; flavonols such as quercetin, luteolin and myricetin; carotenoids such as lutein; and amino acids such as glutamine and lysine help relieve insomnia and anxiety, improves appetite, diminishes fatigue, increases a general sense of physical well-being, elevates mood and decreases feelings of emotional vulnerability. St. John's wort works through much the same bio-mechanism as Prozac.

This means it may function as a serotonin reuptake inhibitor (SRI). (Use caution with St. John's wort with exposure to bright sunlight, it can cause temporary sunburn-like skin reactions.) Although St. John's Wort may work for some, Amino Acid supplements benefit a much broader spectrum of the population with much less risk for complications.

**Drug Interactions:** St. John's Wort and its interaction with many prescription drugs used to treat heart disease, depression, seizures, certain cancers, HIV, and transplant rejection. It can also interfere with the effectiveness of oral contraceptives (birth control). Amino Acids produce much fewer and milder side effects because they are not foreign to the body.

## Valerian



Valerian may be helpful at preventing depression caused by overwork, overstimulation, and chronic mental stress as a relaxing sedative by increasing circulation to the head. While not directly effective for depression, the root is used therapeutically for insomnia, nervous tension, anxiety, and as a relaxer for muscles. Its active ingredient was synthesized as the drug Valium (for anxiety and panic).

**Drug Interaction:** Do not combine with drugs that cause drowsiness, such as benzodiazepines (like Xanax and Valium), anti-convulsants (such as Phenobarbital and Dilantin) and anti-depressants (such as Prozac, Elavil and Tofranil), as well as alcohol as it increases their sedative effects.

**Drug Interactions:** None known.

## Correcting Brain Chemistry Imbalances

For some individuals chemical imbalances in the brain will manifest as anxiety and for others as depression, insomnia, panic attacks, or mental and emotional stress. However, most sufferers deal with a “cocktail” of combined symptoms. Because brain chemistry is established by the Pituitary and Pineal glands, the use of Marigold, Mustard, Chamomile, Horseradish, Mind, Focus, Pituitary, Pineal, Grass-C, Rice-E, and B-Complex vitamins from Peak Frequency Plant Therapy herbs become primary medicine for brain chemistry balance. And because brain chemistry is established in the "gut" eating your way to better mental and emotional health is found in foods that boost brain chemistry such as avocados, lemons, extra virgin olive oil, raspberries, brewer's yeast, and probiotic microbes.

## Correcting Hormone Imbalances that Cause Depression, Anxiety, & Insomnia

Imbalance between the hormones made by the Pineal and Thyroid glands produce depression, hopelessness, anxiety, and panic attacks, which may also bring on sleeplessness, poor memory, mental stress, stomach ailments, irritability, and headaches.

Thyroid supports the use and distribution of all metabolic hormones as fuel and chemical balance. Because brain function is highly electrical, and it uses fatty acids (cholesterols) as the medium for both insulating and protecting nerves, as well as the non-heat producing conduit through which electrical information flows, maintaining Thyroid function with Self-Identity, Thyroid, Rosemary essential oil (applied topically over thyroid) and eating cayenne and horseradish is equally important as taking in the proper essential fatty acids - extra virgin olive oil and avocados. Fish oils, especially salmon, can also play a very important role in fatty acid consumption, or supplementation.

## Natural Supplements

Natural remedies for anxiety, depression, and brain fog combat the root problem of both depression and anxiety through key nutritional ingredients. Key amino acids L-Tyrosine and DL-Phenylalanine that support the production of the neurotransmitters dopamine and norepinephrine (chemicals that regulate your mood and emotion) work well with herbal properties that can be combined to produce healthy balances of biochemistry.

Just a handful of raw cashews a day provides more serotonin than any anti-depressant, and offers powerful antioxidant activity, as well as brain nurturing fatty acids. Eating Peak Frequency Foods and Herbs provides nearly all requirements for complete health and balanced biochemistry.

- **B-Complex** vitamins play an important role in the body's metabolic cycle for generating energy, reducing acidity and bacterial infections, and eliminating stress. Deficiency of B-1 can lead to loss of appetite, weakness, nervous irritability, insomnia, aches & pains, and depressed moods. All other B-vitamins work to make use of B1 and cause metabolic absorption. Always use B vitamins in conjunction with potassium.

- **Fish oil** contains EPA & DHA, the brain activating form of Omega 3 fatty acids. Remember, the brain is over 50% fat and needs essential fatty acids, and these particular fatty acids, to function at its peak. Good quality Fish Oil from cold water, wild caught salmon is safe for all ages including pregnant women.
- **Melatonin** is a hormone that the pineal gland produces naturally, to help regulate sleep. Sunlight balances the amount and quality of melatonin your body produces, while over stimulating the pineal with television, computer or video games, especially at night, stunts melatonin production. During the shorter days of the winter months, the body may produce melatonin either earlier or later in the day than usual. This change can lead to symptoms of seasonal affective disorder (SAD), or winter depression. Poorly nourished people, after 30 years of age, tend to slow in their melatonin production as a whole. If supplementing, use a plant based source, and take between 3-10 mg in the evening to retrain the pineal.
- **L-Tyrosine** is an essential amino acid that once in the brain, is a precursor of the neurotransmitters dopamine, norepinephrine, and epinephrine - the feel good hormones. This essential amino acid is found in many protein rich foods (i.e. bison, salmon, duck eggs, goat and sheep dairy products, red kidney beans, and sprouted seeds and grains) and is a necessary part of a peak diet. Even if you consume these foods, and digestion is dysfunctional, then your consumption levels may not be adequate to support proper brain function. L-Tyrosine has been found to support thyroid hormone levels, increase mood, concentration, productivity, coping ability, sex drive, metabolism, and can promote endurance under stress. Women who take oral contraceptives often have lower levels of Tyrosine; which may be a link between mood swings and oral contraceptives.
- **DL-Phenylalanine** is an essential amino acid that is the precursor for many proteins; namely tyrosine, which in turn is a precursor, for dopamine, epinephrine, and norepinephrine. Phenylalanine is a part of numerous substances in the brain that affect mood, pain, memory, and appetite. Phenylalanine has anti-depressive properties and is effective in reducing depressive moods and countering fatigue.
- **Vinpocetine** is an alkaloid derived from a plant source. It can help to support brain metabolism by increasing cerebral synthesis of ATP and utilization of oxygen. This is one of the ingredients that enable the proper synthesis of the neurotransmitters that control memory, recall, focus, and mood. It is used as a pharmaceutical agent in Europe, Japan, and Mexico, but is available in the USA as a dietary supplement.
- **SAM-e (*S-adenosyl-L-methionine disulfate p-toluenesulfonate*)** is a compound that is produced naturally in the body from the essential amino acid methionine. SAM-e plays a role in various biochemical reactions, including the formation of serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine. Although SAM-e has only been on the market in the US since 1999, it has been studied for decades internationally and is sold as a prescription drug in Spain, Italy, Russia and Germany.

- **Huperzine A (Huperziaserrata)** is an alkaloid found in the herb Huperziaserrata. It has been found to regulate the breakdown of acetylcholine, an important substance needed by the nervous system to transmit information from cell to cell. In China, HupA is being studied to see if it improves cognitive abilities in Alzheimer's patients. It may also be helpful in supporting memory and the learning ability of healthy individuals.
- **5-HTP** is as an extra serotonin booster of tryptophan. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter known to improve mood, calm anxiety, and relieve insomnia.

## Prevention

Brains cells require specific nutrients to produce neurotransmitters. If the amounts of these key nutrients fall below critical levels, the biochemistry of the brain changes, resulting in fatigue, depression, anxiety, irritability, brain fog, and other symptoms. In many cases, people with blood levels indicating that they lack key nutrients, respond quite well to supplements. Unfortunately, in the U.S. doctors do not prescribe natural supplements to treat depression, anxiety, and other health concerns.

Although biochemistry is the biggest factor in mental and emotional health, we are also affected by what happens in our lives. We are all faced with nearly daily onslaughts of unpleasant events that may cause levels of neurotransmitters to fall, temporarily. People with large reserves usually get through the troubling events unscathed, but those with low chemical levels are more likely to experience depressive and/or anxious moods. Stress on all fronts can deplete water soluble vitamins, constricts vessels and ducts, and lowers metabolic function in all areas of the body, starting with digestion.

Because the highest rate of brain imbalance occurs with the combination of over-stimulated and negative thinking, refined foods, poor quality fats, and dehydration, the first place to start making corrections is in the digestive system, (pancreas, stomach, intestines, colon, and appendix), using herbal supplements such as Thyme, Gotu Kola, Centaury, Red Raspberry leaf, and reducing mental stress using herbal extracts such as Chamomile, Marigold, SFF (Stress Free Formula), Heart Harmony, Schizandra, Red Clover, and TRF (Trauma Reducing Formula). Available at [www.ineedherbs.com](http://www.ineedherbs.com)