

## Top Natural Depression Remedies

Most cases of depression if not all can be helped with treatment, but many people are too scared to seek treatment. They may be afraid of the questions that a therapist might ask, or they may be afraid of the medication that is designed to help with depression, but untreated depression is a very dangerous thing. There are some natural remedies that can at least help with depression. It is best to talk to a doctor before following a natural course of treatment for depression.

### 5-HTP

5-hydroxytryptophan, or 5-HTP, is a supplement that works to boost the serotonin levels of the body. Studies have not produced conclusive results yet, however it is known that 5-HTP should not be used in conjunction with antidepressants.

### Alternative Medicine

There are natural remedies like yoga, color therapy, flower therapy, aromatherapy and acupuncture or acupressure that can have some effect. These effects vary from person to person, so try to see if any appeal to you and check them out if you are interested.

### Diet

It might be hard to hear that giving up your beloved coffee or your daily sweets might help you feel better, but removing sweets from your diet can help to keep your mood more stable, preventing the false highs and exaggerated lows as your blood sugar soars and then plummets.

Avoiding caffeine and alcohol can also both help, as both of these dampen moods. The alcohol is a relaxant while the caffeine is an energy booster, but the effects of both quickly wear off leaving us feeling worse than ever and producing symptoms like insomnia, anxiety, mood swings and even depression.

Since vitamin B6 and Magnesium can both be gotten from your diet and can help you keep your natural serotonin levels up, it is important to add food to your diet that include one or both of these. Magnesium can be found in nuts, whole grains, legumes and vegetables. As a side effect, eating healthier can also help your depression by helping you to feel healthier and boosting your self-image.

### Exercise

Like diet, exercise is something that most of us avoid as much as possible when we are depressed, preferring inactivity and isolation. Regular exercise, however, can boost your mood by eliminating the stress hormones in your body as well as by boosting your own self image as you begin to look and feel better. Exercise itself releases mood-boosting chemicals in your brain, and gives you something productive and hopefully fun to focus your mind on.

### Folic Acid

Folic Acid or Folate is a particular kind of B vitamin that is often found to be deficient in depressed people. You can get Folate from eating leafy greens as well as some beans or fortified grains. It is a very common deficiency because of poor diet, certain medical conditions, and various medications such as birth control pills that eliminate it in the body.

### Light Therapy

Getting enough sunlight is a natural mood booster, and a lack of sunlight can lead to depression. Getting out in the air and the sunlight for a walk or a run or other exercise can be helpful to boost your mood and can be a double-threat to depression because you are getting exercise as well. If you cannot get out in the sunlight for any reason or if you can't get enough sunlight, you can use lamps that simulate natural sunlight to help you boost your mood with this light therapy. Don't forget to wear sunscreen to protect your skin while you are out on your walks.

### Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids can be found in fish like salmon, and offer many benefits including improved mental functioning. Omega-3 fatty acids can be used in conjunction with antidepressants to help these medications function more effectively. Depression is less common in countries like Taiwan and

Japan, which have a culture that consumes much more fish.

### **SAM-e**

SAM-e is short for S-adenosyl-L-methionine, and is a chemical that is found naturally in the body. It has been shown in studies to be more effective than a placebo at treating depression, and is available in the United States as an over the counter supplement in health food stores and drug stores as well as online. It is somewhat expensive, but it can be argued that it is worth the expense as long as it helps.

### **St. John's Wort**

St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) is traditionally used for worry, nervousness, poor sleep and sadness. Over 20 clinical trials conducted to date suggest that St. John's Wort is about as effective as medication for mild to moderate depression, although it is not effective in severe cases.

### **About the Author**

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