

# **5 Ways to Fight Depression Without Drugs**

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## Previously...

- Depression is associated with physical differences in the brain
- Antidepressants are the third most commonly used class of prescription drugs
  - 30% of patients get no results; 70% will have only partial improvement
  - Especially ineffective for people with **mild/moderate** depression
  - Side effects can be severe
    - Suicidal thoughts in young people
    - Nausea, dry mouth, sexual problems, insomnia, headaches weight gain, and more
- You can relieve the symptoms of depression without the adverse effects of prescription drugs

# 1. Exercise

- Research shows that **exercise may be as good as drugs** in treating depression.
- Even better – it works quickly. There are significant benefits in emotional state with as little as two weeks of exercise, in contrast to antidepressant medications which may take 6 to 8 weeks before full effects (if they work at all)
- On study found that patients who did the equivalent of 35 minutes of walking, six days per week, cut the severity of their depression almost in half
- In a 2011 study, doctors prescribed an exercise program for their patients who were not helped by antidepressant drugs – 30% of them came out of their depression completely, after exercising just 10-30 minutes a day!

## 2: Omega-3 fatty acids

- Omega-3s are highly concentrated in the brain
  - Critical for brain function
  - Reduce inflammation
- Symptoms of omega-3 deficiency: mood swings and **depression**
  - Also: dry skin and hair, heart problems, fatigue, poor memory, poor circulation
- Researchers have consistently noted that people with diagnosed depression have low blood levels of omega-3 fatty acids
- In a randomized, controlled trial, supplementation with omega-3 fatty acids was associated with a 50% reduction in depression symptoms (measured using the Hamilton Rating Scale)

### 3. Curcumin

- Why does curcumin relieve depression?
  - Curcumin reduces inflammation (high levels of inflammation associated with increased risk of depression and other chronic diseases)
  - Curcumin restores levels of serotonin and dopamine
  - Curcumin increases neuron formation in the hippocampus, the area of the brain associated with memory and learning
- 60 patients received a special curcumin (BCM-95), the prescription drug fluoxetine, or both, for 6 weeks
  - About 75% of the curcumin group and 70% of the fluoxetine group reported “good or excellent” results
  - Conclusion: curcumin was equally as effective as fluoxetine, *without the adverse effects*
- 56 patients with major depression received 500 mg of BCM-95 curcumin for 8 weeks
  - Experienced significant reductions in symptoms of anxiety and depression
  - Especially effective in patients with atypical depression, a type of depression that is difficult to treat

## 4. Sleep

- Sleep problems and depression are linked
  - In one study, 97% of people with depression also had difficulty sleeping
  - Another study found that getting 5 or **less** hours of sleep leads to a 53% risk of depression, while sleeping **more** than 10 hours increases risk by 49%
- Address any issues that are interfering with sleep
  - Changing hormone levels (menopause or thyroid associated)
    - Black cohosh, iodine
  - Pain problems
    - Curcumin, boswellia, DLPA, nattokinase
  - Stress and anxiety (racing thoughts)
    - Echinacea angustifolia

## 5. Vitamin D

- Vitamin D and depression
  - Deficient men are 160% more likely to have depression
  - Deficient women are 200% more likely to have depression
- Low vitamin D makes depression symptoms worse
  - Mental health problems increase in the early spring after a winter of low exposure to ultraviolet light
- Vitamin D increases serotonin levels
- Case Report: 3 women with depression and low vitamin D levels (all taking antidepressants)
  - Dosed with 50,000 IU of vitamin D2 once a week for eight weeks followed by 1,000 IU of vitamin D3 daily for four more weeks
  - Results: all three patients improved. One patient's depression score changed from severe depression to mild depression. A second patient's score improved to a level suggesting she had just minimal symptoms of depression.

# **Quick News Headline**

## **Fish Consumption During Pregnancy**

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# Fish Consumption Advice

- FDA and EPA recently urged pregnant women to increase their fish consumption
- FDA research shows
  - 20% of pregnant women eat no fish
  - 50% ate less than 2 ounces a week
  - 75% ate less than 4 ounces a week
- **Consumer Reports put out a report in August recommending pregnant women avoid ALL tuna consumption because of concerns regarding mercury poisoning**
  - Average of 60 micrograms of mercury in canned albacore tuna, versus 2 micrograms of mercury in a 4 oz serving of salmon
  - Mercury exposure in the womb can lead to learning disabilities, memory problems and movement disorders
- Recommended fish and seafood: salmon, shrimp, and scallops

## Why eat fish during pregnancy?

Fish provides omega fatty acids which are CRUCIAL for a baby's developing brain. Supplemental omega-3 from salmon provides these essential nutrients **without risk** of heavy metal contamination.

# Quick News Headline

## Varicose Veins

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# Varicose Veins

- 30-60% of people – especially women – experience varicose veins
  - Pregnancy is one of the most significant accelerators of varicose vein development
- A varicose vein develops when weak valves and veins allow blood to pool in the lower legs instead of being pushed back up to the heart
- Aging, weight gain, and standing for long periods of time also increase the risk for varicose vein formation

# 3 ways to prevent and treat varicose veins

## 1. Exercise

- Moderate exercise improves circulation and can reduce varicose vein formation
- WALKING is excellent for stretching and toning your calves and improving circulation

## 2. Grape seed OPCs

- Strengthen the vein wall and prevent leakage and swelling of the vein

## 3. Mesoglycan

- Building blocks for veins and arteries
- repair damage to vein walls and prevent abnormal fibrin formation – people with varicose veins have an abnormal tendency to store fibrin
- Fibrin deposits around varicose veins cause the lumps seen under the skin on the legs

# Prescription Pain Killers

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# Americans Love Drugs

- , yet consume the majority of prescription drugs.
- **Did you know?** Americans represent 5% of the global population, but consume 80% of the world's supply of prescription pain medications
- In 2010, enough prescription painkillers were prescribed to **medicate every American adult every 4 hours** for a full month
- **Do Americans really suffer from more pain and disease than any other country in the world?**

# Why do Americans take so many pain pills?

- One theory: many patients are using these drugs to not only relieve pain, but also to reduce their symptoms of **stress** and **depression**
  - The opioid drugs are the most “abused” type of pain medication
  - They work by triggering receptors that reduce the perception of pain, and by increasing feelings of euphoria
- At least **half** of all patients with depression also report problems with chronic pain

# What natural substance effectively relieves pain AND treats depression?

- Curcumin!
- Remember – curcumin has been shown to treat depression as effectively as prescription drugs WITHOUT adverse effects
- Curcumin is also a powerful natural pain reliever
- Shown in clinical studies to reduce pain and stiffness of arthritis as effectively as prescription anti-inflammatory drugs
  - WITHOUT risk of dependence or adverse effects



# How to use curcumin for pain/depression

- Dosage: at least 3 capsules daily of a formula containing curcumin plus boswellia, DLPA and nattokinase
- Take for any type of pain
- NOTE: no known interactions with any prescription pain medications

# Herb of the Day

## Rhodiola

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# Rhodiola – nature's energy booster

- Rhodiola is a plant – Rhodiola rosacea – native to the northern areas of Europe and Asia
- It is particularly well known in Russia
- Benefits:
  - Boosts energy during physical exertion (great for athletes!)
  - Increases mental performance and concentration (great for college students!)
  - Relieves the symptoms of anxiety
  - Alleviates mild to moderate depression
  - Improves physical fitness and reduces mental fatigue (ideal for people with stressful occupations!)
  - Rhodiola has also been shown to help regulate menstrual cycles and may help increase fertility
  - Rhodiola is VERY well known for its ability to increase libido

# How to use Rhodiola

- Most experts recommend Rhodiola be taken on an empty stomach for best absorption
- Rhodiola pairs very well with other adaptogens, especially ashwagandha
- Take 500 mg of a combination of rhodiola and ashwagandha up to three times daily

# Eggs

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# Skip the Cereal for Breakfast

- The Environment Working Group recently released a report on breakfast cereals
  - Cereal marketed to children contained 40% more sugar than “adult” cereal
  - **All children’s cereals contained added sugar**
  - Most contained 30% of a child’s total sugar intake for the day
  - Several brands were more than 50% sugar (by weight) including Kellogg’s Honey Smacks

# Eggs – The Perfect Breakfast Food

- Eggs are one of the most nutritious foods on the planet
- Eggs DO NOT increase cholesterol levels
  - In 70% of people, egg consumption had NO effect on cholesterol, in 30% of people there was a very small increase in total cholesterol.
  - In one study, two eggs daily for 6 weeks increased HDL cholesterol by 10%!
  - More importantly, egg consumption has been shown to change dangerous small, dense LDL cholesterol particles to the large, “fluffy” and not dangerous form
- In one study of 30 overweight women, eating eggs instead of bagels for breakfast increased feelings of fullness and made them automatically eat fewer calories for the next 36 hours
- In another study, replacing a bagel breakfast with an egg breakfast caused significant weight loss over a period of 8 weeks
- An egg contains a variety of vitamins and minerals, plus 6 grams of protein and 5 grams of healthy fats, and lutein, choline and zeaxanthin