

Valley Heal

Depression has many roots but cures include healthy food and a dose of love

Dear Dr. Meinig:

A few years ago I wrote and asked for information on nutrition that would help someone in depression. You wrote such a good article that I kept it for years. Now I have misplaced it. Do you have a copy or could you write the information again for me?
M.R.

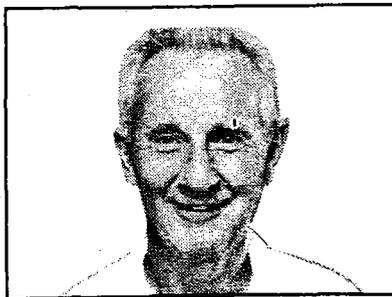
Dear M.R.:

Over the years I have written several articles about the problems involved in depression. Inasmuch as new information keeps unfolding, I will bring you up to date on the various factors involved.

According to the California Medical Association, "Depression is considered by many doctors to be the most under-recognized of all major medical conditions. It has been estimated that 15 to 20 percent of adults between the ages of 18 and 74 may be suffering from depressive symptoms, although very few of those in need of help will receive treatment. Depression in children and adolescents also frequently goes undiagnosed."

When a person is depressed, something is out of order in the way the brain is functioning. Nobel Laureate, Linus Pauling, stated that mental, emotional illness and abnormalities are due to deficiencies in the brain of micronutrients that are normally present. Paling charges the loss of these nutrients to be caused by the growing of foods by artificial methods through the use of synthetic chemicals and processing procedures.

A whole host of other conditions can coexist when one has depression. Each of them has nutritional components. It seems obvious that a person who has had a severe surgical operation might afterward become depressed. What isn't so obvious is how the use of medications and drugs can be involved; that allergies to foods and chemicals are causative; and hypoglycemia; diabetes; lack of sun exposure (particularly during winter months); work and family excess stress problems; and poor diet practices each may play a role in the development of the depressed state of mind.



George
Meinig, DDS

For example, medications such as the use of birth control pills limit one's vitamin B-12 and folic acid. They also cause deficiency of B-6 and C, and inhibit the metabolism of zinc, copper, iron and calcium. Diuretics cause increased urination that results in a loss of many essential minerals. Many people take several medications. They are particularly prone to mental problems.

Dr. Jose Yaryra-Tablas' Mental Health Center, found depression and aggressive behavior improved on a high protein diet supplemented with B-6 plus sound nutritional principles and B-complex vitamins. I go along with his stressing the need for proteins, as they are the building blocks for the functioning and repair of all cells. The use of fish, poultry, eggs and meat, and fish oil supplements to supply Omega 3 essential fatty acids would be very helpful.

In addition to two raw food salads each day using olive oil and/or flaxseed oil for dressings, one's diet should include one or two pieces of fresh fruit and 100% whole grain foods. Unroasted, unsalted nuts, seeds and sprouts are additional excellent sources of essential nutrients.

The list of detrimental foods and beverages is rather long and, unfortunately, one-third to one-half the average American's daily dietary intake is composed of these foods.

Sugar is a primary factor because it plays so many destructive roles to all body tissues. However, its blocking of the excretions of the posterior pituitary gland has a direct connection to mental disturbances.

Other items that upset the activity of brain cells are the nutrient-robbled foods that affect other body tissues as well. They are white flour products; refined cereals; caffeine products such as coffee, tea, soft drinks, cocoa, chocolate, tablets that contain caffeine such as Anacin; and include margarine and vegetable oils (olive and flaxseed oil are okay).

The preferred beverage is distilled water or water that has been carbon and reverse osmosis filtered. A good multiple vitamin/mineral supplement plus extra vitamin C, B-complex and E, kelp or kelp tablets, along with three good meals each day give assurance that these nutrient needs of the brain are being met.

In addition, an outdoor exercise program is a key aid to rapid recovery. This can be long walks and if at all possible, they should be carried out without the use of eye glasses, contact lenses or sun glasses.

There are numbers of psychiatric and psychological approaches to the treatment of depression. The one that seems to make the most practical sense is that proposed by Lester Levinson of Sedona fame.

Levinson finds too many individuals are dying on the inside for a need of love while all the while denying their need of it. His positive thinking approach isn't the usual, "suppression of negativity," but involves recognition of the choices available that free us of negatives.

Happiness, Lester says, doesn't come from receiving more and more love from others but happens to us in the process of our loving others. In giving freely of love to everyone, we "release" our anger, hostility, hatred and annoyances, allowing depression to flee and happiness to take its place.

Everyone has questions about nutrition. Send yours to Dr. George, c/o Ojai Valley News, Box 277, Ojai, CA 92024.

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