

Vitamin C

Increases Mood: Vitamin C is necessary to create dopamine, norepinephrine, and serotonin in the body. These three basic molecules play a major role in mood regulation.

Sources Include: Oranges, lemons, limes, papaya, potatoes, apricots, bell peppers, cantaloupe, cauliflower, collard greens, mangos, kiwi fruit, radishes, raspberries, spinach, summer squash, strawberries, tomatoes, watermelon, pineapple, broccoli, cabbage, and Brussels sprouts.

Vitamin D

Increases Mood: Vitamin D has been shown to decrease the amount of cytokines produced within the body (cytokines are proteins that are inflammatory, and have been linked to depression). It has also been shown to increase serotonin levels, which in turn works to increase mood.

Sources Include: Sunshine is how most people meet at least some of their vitamin D needs. Other sources include fatty fish (salmon, tuna, mackerel), beef liver, cheese, egg yolks, some mushrooms, and fortified foods such as milk, cereals, yogurts, margarines'.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Increases Mood: Omega-3's have been shown to decrease pro-inflammatory cytokines which may be associated with depression. Their anti-inflammatory properties have also been shown to increase brain derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which has been related to decreased symptoms of depression.

Sources Include: Fatty fish (salmon, tuna, trout, mackerel, and sardines), grass fed animals, algae, flaxseed, walnuts, kale, leafy green vegetables, Brussels sprouts, and fortified foods such as milk, eggs, orange juice, yogurt, and spreads.

Water

Increases Mood: Recent research showed that even mild depression could alter mood. The study found that symptoms of dehydration included headaches, fatigue, decreased concentration, decreased working memory, and increased tension and anxiety. (<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/water/NU00283>)

Facts: Up to 60% of our bodies are made of water. Our brains are made up of about 70% water. Our lungs are about 90% water. Our blood is approximately 83% water which aids in the digestion of food, the elimination of wastes, and the control of body temperature. Every single cell in our bodies needs water to functions properly.

Chocolate

Increases Mood: Several active constituents in chocolate have been recognized for their “**mood enhancing**” properties:

Here are a few:

Flavanols improve vascular health, and increase blood flow to the brain and cognitive function.

Flavonoids improve antioxidant activity in the body which protects against chronic diseases including neurodegenerative types.

Anandamides may be connected to an endorphin release which positively affects emotions.

Health promoting benefits are better from **darker chocolate**.

Folate

Increases Mood: Folate deficiency has been linked to depression and other brain diseases such as Alzheimer's and dementia. A deficiency could also lead to a type of anemia which over time results in decreased oxygen supply and possible symptoms of fatigue, mood changes and/or weakness.

Sources Include: Cereals, baked goods, leafy vegetables (kale, chard, spinach, broccoli, lettuce), okra, asparagus, fruits (bananas, melons, lemons), legumes, yeast, mushrooms, organ meat (beef liver, kidney), orange juice, and tomato juice.

Vitamin B12

Increases Mood: Vitamin B12 is important for the formation of red blood cells. If red blood cells are defective they function incorrectly and may cause anemia and the symptoms which accompany anemia, such as mood swings, fatigue and cognitive decline. Deficiency has been linked to Alzheimer's disease, dementia and depression.

Sources Include: Fish, shellfish, meat, eggs, and dairy products.

Vitamin B6

Increases Mood: B6 supports the nervous system and is active in the process of creating serotonin (a neurotransmitter), from tryptophan.

Low levels of serotonin have been connected to mood disorders, particularly depression. Vitamin B6 also plays a role in synthesizing dopamine, norepinephrine and GABA, all of which help to increase feelings of happiness.

Sources Include: Tuna, beef, chicken, turkey, potatoes, halibut, spinach, summer squash, bell peppers, turnip greens, and shitake mushrooms.