

WELLNESS review

Are the Blues Getting you Down?

- Have you been feeling sad or unhappy?
- Are you finding it difficult to get out of bed in the morning?
- Do you feel like you just can't face another day?
- Do you burst into tears at the smallest thing?
- Have you noticed that lately, friends and family are avoiding you or walking on egg shells around you?

Occasional Low Moods are Normal

Whilst it is normal to feel like this occasionally, there are people whose lives can become engulfed by a constant dark cloud of negative feelings and low moods. These people may also find that their mood can affect their appetite, sleeping patterns and general health.

Many People Struggle with Low Moods

The heart breaking news is that, today, there are at least one million people in Australia that have been diagnosed with a mood disorder. The good news is that natural therapies may provide some options for you if you are struggling with low moods.

What Affects our Moods?

It seems that the world today is so much busier; many of us are working longer hours and not spending enough time looking after ourselves. Throw in financial problems and relationship issues and it's easy to see how our emotions can become affected. However, did you know that other things such as our diet, being overweight, hormonal imbalances and even chronic pain can contribute to the spiral of sadness? These things can upset the delicate chemical balance within our brains, so it is essential to address these factors if you have mood problems. Fortunately, our clinic may bring you back into balance with a range of well researched management programs and nutritional and herbal medicines designed to address mood disorders, and may help to resolve any driving factors.

Lifting the Dark Clouds

When it comes to helping people maintain their moods, we believe quite strongly that one shoe doesn't fit all; this is why we manage each person individually. We use a number of well researched natural medicines that may be very effective for helping people with low moods. Here are some examples.

5-Hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP) and SAME

5-HTP is a nutrient derived from the amino acid tryptophan. SAME is a substance that is naturally made in our bodies. These two nutrients may be useful to support normal functioning of our brain and nervous system. Both 5-HTP and SAME may help

to correct imbalances in your neurotransmitters or 'brain chemicals'. This may help to improve anxiety, irritability and that overwhelming chocolate or sweet craving that you get when you are sad!

Pinellia, Poria, and Magnolia

Pinellia, Poria and Magnolia are herbs that have been traditionally used for thousands of years to manage mood disorders. These herbs may be particularly useful if you suffer digestive upsets associated with stress such as nausea, burping or pain. They may also be good if you have excessive mucous secretion associated with stress.

St John's Wort

St John's Wort, another popular herb, has many beneficial actions for maintaining healthy moods. In fact, scientific studies have shown that it can help to regulate many of our 'feel good' neurotransmitters, such as serotonin and dopamine. In doing so, it may help improve mental health. Did you know that St John's Wort can interact with some conventional medications? As your Natural Healthcare Professional we can help determine whether St John's Wort is suitable for your needs.

The Importance of Good Diet and Regular Exercise

As well as Natural Medicines, it is important that we look at your diet and lifestyle. Poor diet and a sedentary lifestyle can exacerbate the effect that stress and low moods has on your body. At this clinic we have a number of dietary and exercise plans that we can advise you on to help you eat well and feel better, creating a lasting change and true wellness.

Other Important Management Strategies

Other recommendations we could discuss to help you better manage your moods include the following:

- **Counselling:** Counselling is offered by various types of mental health professionals. Counselling and therapy have proven benefits in reduction of mood symptoms and improvement in overall mental health and attitude.
- **Relaxation techniques:** There are many ways to use structured relaxation techniques to help control stress and improve physical and mental wellbeing.
- **Meditation:** Meditation is one of the most popular techniques to achieve physical and mental relaxation.
- **Support systems:** People with strong social support systems experience fewer physical and emotional upsets than their less-connected counterparts. Loved ones, friends, business associates, neighbours, and even pets may all be part of your support network. Developing strong social support networks can help you cope with sadness and low moods.
- **Life goals:** Having a firm purpose in life is associated with the tendency to have less anxiety and a lower incidence of depression.

If you, or somebody you know, is feeling down, then it is a good idea to make an appointment. Naturopathic Medicine may offer you real solutions to help improve your mood and overall wellbeing.

