

Depression
By
Rakel Integrative Medicine 2nd ed.

Depression

Nutrition

Caffeine and Simple Sugars

- Cross-national epidemiologic: a correlation between sugar intake & rates of major depressive disorders.[14]
- Depressed patients ↑ consumption of sucrose compared with the general population.[15]
- A small cohort trial: eliminating refined sucrose & caffeine from diets of depressed patients c unexplained depression caused improvement by 1 week
 - symptoms worsened when pts were challenged c these substances but not c placebo challenge.[16]

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- Regular high-level caffeine consumption (>750 mg daily) appears to be associated with depression. [\[17\]](#) [\[18\]](#)
- A trial eliminating caffeine & simple sugars is warranted
 - based on a high degree of safety
 - low cost

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Alcohol

- Problem drinking more common in depressed individuals than in the general population & are associated with worse outcomes.[\[19\]](#)
- Alcohol transiently ↑ turnover of serotonin, the
- Alcohol long-term effect is ↓ levels of serotonin & catecholamines.[\[20\]](#)
- Discontinuing of alcohol consumption is warranted
 - Because of the safety, potential health benefits, & low cost of this intervention,

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Physical Activity

- More than 1000 trials have examined the relationship between exercise & depression.[6]
- Regularly performed exercise is as effective as psychotherapy & pharmaceutical approaches are.[7]
- Both aerobic & anaerobic activities are effective. [8] [9]
- A meta-analysis of 80 studies showed moderate benefit of exercise for depression
 - but confidence intervals are wide, making absolute conclusions difficult.[10]

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Physical Activity

- Effect probably multifactorial
- May improve depression by ↑ levels of serotonin & endorphins
- Exercise benefits may include:
 - active role in their recovery
 - generally leads to improved self-esteem & self-confidence as body strength and self-image improve
 - a “time-out” period—an opportunity to leave troubles behind temporarily

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Physical Activity

- According to Fox, “Moderate regular exercise should be considered as a viable means of treating depression & anxiety & improving mental well-being in the general public.”[\[12\]](#)
- The combination of exercise & antidepressant pharmacotx is superior to exercise alone,[\[9\]](#)
- For more seriously depressed pts exercise should be started as adjunctive tx as soon as symptoms begin to abate

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