

# 5 Foods That Can Help Depression

Food is one of the most common things we turn to when life isn't going our way. Something about eating delicious stuff makes the pain or anxiety we're feeling a little less awful. But, if you're **one of the 350 million** people who suffers from depression, you know all too well that it takes a lot more than a couple pints of ice cream to boost your mood.

It's pretty normal for depressed and anxious people to be taking medicine that combats the effects of their condition, but what many people don't know is that diet can affect our mental health just as much as anything else.

Certain foods contain certain vitamins, minerals, fats and antioxidants that can help change our brain chemistry. If you've been depressed or anxious lately, try incorporating these five natural foods into your diet and see if anything changes for you!

## Whole Grains

When we're trying to shed a few extra pounds, carbohydrates aren't exactly our friends, but when it comes to making us feel better, they're perfect. Whole grains are rich in tryptophan, an amino acid that is vital in the brain's creation of serotonin and melatonin.

**Studies have found** that diets that are rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains can reduce shifts in mood and relieve anxiety and depression.

## Nuts

Full of omega-3 fatty acids, protein and antioxidants, nuts can also help relieve depression and anxiety symptoms. President of the Inflammation Foundation, [Dr. Barry Sears](#), says that eating raw nuts with a high polyphenol count will work the best.

“Almonds and walnuts would be good choices. It’s more the magnesium in the nuts that promotes calmness,” he told *Medical Daily*.

If you don’t like either of those nuts, cashews will also do the trick. They’re full of iron, magnesium, Vitamin B6, protein and other amino acids.

## Blueberries

Blueberries’ high levels of antioxidants have been found to relieve [feelings of depression](#). They also have a fairly high vitamin C content level, which has been found to reduce levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, which in turn reduces anxiety.

## Dairy

Anxious feelings and thoughts have been tied to low blood sugar levels. Thus, consuming dairy foods, like yogurt or eggs, are great for fighting off depression and anxiety. Not to mention, they’re great sources of protein, which helps in the production of healthy neurotransmitters in the brain.

“Yes, there is truth to the ‘old saying’ about drinking hot milk before bed! The ingredient tryptophan has a natural calming agent that actually relaxes you without medication. Tryptophan can be found in milk, all dairy products, and turkey,” Beverly Hills psychotherapist, Dr. Fran Walfish,

told *Medical Daily*.

## Dark Chocolate

Containing tyrosine, dark chocolate works as a natural antidepressant by increasing levels of dopamine. Because dopamine directly influences our emotional state by activating the pleasure centers of the brain, its levels are important to our happiness and mood.

It's widely known that the cocoa found in dark chocolates causes the release of serotonin through the relaxing of blood vessels in the brain.

It's also been seen to reduce cortisol levels and release **'feel good' endorphins**.

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