

# Natural Help 4...

# Depression



## What is Depression?

Anyone can feel down from time to time or experience bouts of emotional grief or sadness due to some unexpected life event. We grieve when someone dies, or feel sadness and loss when a close relationship ends, or even lose a job.

All these feelings are normal and are part of the ups-and-downs of life. But clinical depression is more than just the blues, more than the expected grief after any loss, and most certainly more than a bad couple of days.

Depression is a deep and dark state, a black hole that may seem impossible to emerge from, and a serious medical condition involving a delicate balance of brain chemicals. Unlike a bad mood that you can simply snap out of, depression can severely disrupt the ability to function properly and can extend through every aspect of your life with serious consequences.

[Signs of depression](#) may include feeling somewhat flat, tired and unmotivated. As it progresses a person with depression may no longer want to participate in social activities or hobbies that they once enjoyed.

Eventually individuals with depression may even lose the drive to work altogether, their relationships become strained and they push people away and become unreachable, and the will to live a happy, productive life slowly fades.

Although the future for someone suffering with depression may look bleak, there is a light at the end of the tunnel – depression is treatable and those suffering can live a happy, normal life.

## Who Suffers from Depression? Is there a Cure?

Depression can affect anyone, although it tends to affect twice as many women as men and typical age of onset is 25. Sadly, it is becoming more prevalent and the age of onset is decreasing over the years.

As a result childhood depression, adolescent depression and suicide rates are on the increase. The fortunate news is that if treated, depression can be managed successfully and happiness need not be an unreachable illusion.

## Diagnosing Depression

If you suspect you are suffering from [depression](#), make an appointment to see a psychologist or your family doctor. You will be asked for a detailed description of your symptoms, how long you have had them and how this is affecting your daily

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life.

A medical check is advised as signs of depression may be similar to other medical conditions such as hypothyroidism or Cushing's disease. If your first appointment was with your medical doctor, you may be referred to a mental health practitioner who will be able to further assess the situation and inform you of your treatment options.

## Symptoms of Depression

Depression is characterized by the loss of interest or pleasure in most previously enjoyed activities, as well as a [depressed](#) or sad mood felt most of the day, nearly everyday. It can be felt as hopelessness, feeling empty, or tearful. Perspective is also often altered, and the person suffering from depression may view life differently, and seem isolated from the rest of the world – unable to make a connection. Along with this, [signs of depression](#) usually include some of the following:

- Weight loss or weight gain
- Sleep disturbances: Difficulty falling or staying asleep (insomnia) or sleeping too much (hypersomnia)
- Difficulty thinking and concentrating
- Difficulty making decisions
- Fatigue or loss of energy
- Feeling physically slow, agitated, or restless to the degree that others begin to notice
- Physical complaints such as headaches, joint pains and stomach aches
- Low self-esteem, feeling worthless or excessively guilty
- Low libido or diminished interest in sex
- Suicidal thoughts, or continuous thoughts of death and self-harm

For a formal diagnosis of Clinical Depression to be made, most of these symptoms need to have been present most of the time for at least two weeks.

## What Causes Depression?

### Causes of depression include:

**Genetics** – Genetic disposition is one of the leading causes of depression. Studies have shown that people who have relatives with a history of depression are two to three times more likely to develop depression themselves. There is also a strong genetic link between depression, anxiety and panic disorder.

**Brain chemistry** – Neurotransmitters such as serotonin and certain hormones such as the stress hormone cortisol have been related to depression. [Depression](#) often occurs when the delicate balance of these brain chemicals is disturbed resulting in a general imbalance in other neurotransmitters.

**Stressful life events** – As mentioned above, the stress hormone cortisol is particularly related to the neurotransmitters involved in depression. A stressful life event such as loss of a job, a loved one, marital problems, or financial issues can trigger an over production in cortisol resulting in depletion of serotonin and depression. People are especially at risk if they do not have the necessary social



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### Michele Carelse, Clinical Psychologist



All of our natural remedies are formulated by our expert team of herbalists, naturopaths and homeopaths, and headed by Michele Carelse.

Michele has had years of experience in the manufacturing and use of natural remedies. In addition, she is a trained Clinical Psychologist and has been incorporating natural remedies into her treatment of patients with depression, anxiety, ADD, ADHD and stress for many years with spectacular results.

support.

**Learned helplessness and cognitive styles** – Is the glass half empty or half full? [Depression](#) can result if an individual is inclined to view the world in a negative light. With a pessimistic outlook on life, even the small things become major catastrophes, and the inner critic can become over-bearing. These people often expect the worst and hardly ever see the positive side to a situation. They often assume the blame when things do go wrong and attribute it to self failure. Certain experiences can also teach an individual that they have little or no control over life events and are thus helpless. These ideas are often learnt and make us more vulnerable to developing depression.

**Childhood trauma or poor parenting** may contribute to disturbances in emotional development and vulnerability to depression in adulthood.

## Help for Depression

Whatever the causes of depression, the condition can have serious effects on your life, therefore it is important to find a proper way to treat it. However, it's important to be properly diagnosed before pursuing any treatments methods. Often times, psychiatrists and other professionals will hastily prescribe pharmaceutical medication, which can have serious side effects that have been well-documented.

Therapeutic measures and lifestyle changes are just as important when it comes to treating depression, so if you decide to pursue this route, it's very important to use psychological and wellness treatment in conjunction.

However, [natural remedies for depression](#) such as homeopathic remedies can be extremely effective in combating depression, and they come with almost no risk of side effects.

## Common Treatment Options for Depression

### Drug Treatment

Medical practitioners are often quick to prescribe [antidepressants](#) as a first option when treating depression. Ensure that you research all the options and are aware of all the side-effects and precautions of taking anti-depressants before making a decision.

The most commonly prescribed [antidepressants](#) are SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors) such as Prozac and Zoloft; Tricyclic antidepressants such as Elavin and Tofranil; and MAOIs (Monoamine oxidase inhibitors) such as Nardil and Marplan.

These all have various side effects which may be quite distressing to some and they are all required by the FDA to carry a warning about the increased risk of suicide, hostility, and agitation.

According to many reports, withdrawal effects are often experienced when these prescription drugs are discontinued. While [antidepressants](#) may work for some, they should be taken under medical supervision and will work best if used in

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conjunction with other treatment modalities such as cognitive therapy or an exercise program.

## Psychotherapy

Psychotherapy has significant, long lasting effects as a means of treating depression. Various therapeutic approaches including cognitive-behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, and family therapy offer great insight as they strive to help the individual deal with any underlying issues that may be triggering depression, or social consequences caused by it.

## Relaxation techniques

Meditation, yoga and deep breathing are some of the relaxation techniques that been shown to reduce anxiety and clear the mind. Done regularly, these techniques can help alleviate some of the [symptoms of depression](#).

## Natural Herbal and Homeopathic Remedies

Taken from the age old wisdom of those who relied on nature to cure all woes, certain herbal and homeopathic remedies have been shown to significantly reduce the [symptoms of depression](#) without the unwanted side-effects.

The most commonly used as natural remedies for depression are Hypericum Perforatum (St. John's Wort) which has been called “nature’s Prozac” and Passiflora which is one of nature's best natural tranquilizers.

Many people around the world have now turned to this more natural approach of regaining the subtle balance of brain chemicals and rejuvenating the body and mind for all round natural health. [Natural remedies for depression](#) that include homeopathic remedies can also be of great benefit and are free of side effects as well as safe to use during pregnancy.

## Other Disorders Related to Depression

Depression often co-exists with other disorders such as:

- Anxiety disorders
- Eating Disorders
- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)
- Substance abuse
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Adjustment Disorder

## Tips for Coping with Depression

**Regular exercise!** Even if only for 30 min at a time, three days a week, a good workout will increase happiness inducing endorphins while burning the stress hormone cortisol which is associated with depression. If you do not feel motivated, or dislike exercising at first, keep going for long enough and you will definitely begin to see benefits within 3 – 6 weeks.

**Talk it out.** Talk to someone you trust, a close friend or a licensed counselor and



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try and come up with a plan of action. Often it is the first steps to recovery that are the most difficult, so try not to do it alone.

**Eat a healthy diet.** A poor diet depletes energy levels and a deficiency in certain nutrients (e.g. iron) can result in fatigue and feelings of [depression](#). Ensure that you are getting all the vitamins and minerals that your body needs, and explore serotonin uplifting foods such as oats, turkey, milk, pasta and other carbohydrate-rich foods.

**Set realistic goals and responsibilities.** It is important to have a plan of action and to start taking responsibility for the future, but know your limits and set your goals within reason. Small steps taken consistently are better than big steps which cause you to bomb out.

**Prioritize and learn to say no.** Avoid unnecessary stress by doing what needs to be done first and learn to look after your own needs. Be careful not to allow others to overload you with their responsibilities.

**Make a conscious effort to stop negative thoughts.** Try and change these thoughts into neutral thoughts and do not indulge in pessimism. Remember that this will take time, and may be difficult at first, but it can also be life-changing. Psychotherapy can be very helpful in this regard.

**Take action!** While [symptoms of depression](#) may make you feel like crawling into bed or existing in your pajamas and slippers all day, make a decision everyday to get up, get dressed and do something. Simply cleaning your room, going for a scenic drive or doing something creative can be uplifting and help break a bad cycle.

**Turn to nature.** One of the best ways to re-energize and uplift your spirit is to get in touch with nature. Go for a walk in the forest, a picnic in the park or a simply sit on the beach and watch a sunset.

**Let others help you.** Don't turn down a helping hand or a comforting hug. When depression hits, you may feel like pushing people away, but this is the time you need love and affection the most. Pets are also a great source of love and comfort!

**Help others.** One often feels a loss of purpose when [depressed](#), so regain a positive purpose by helping others. Volunteer at a soup kitchen or help out at an organization that could benefit from your time and skills.

**Make a change.** Change is often very invigorating and refreshing. Aim to change your life-style to a healthier one, change your negative attitude towards life, and change your job if you know that your current work makes you miserable. It need not even be a drastic change. Simply re-arranging furniture or giving a touch of paint to a dull room can go a long way to uplifting your mood – better yet, it will keep you busy.

**Read all about it.** There are many books which are very helpful in learning how to manage depression. These include books written by experts in the field – as well as books published by ordinary people with a useful or uplifting contribution to share.

## The Natural Approach

### **to choose Native Remedies as your trusted suppliers of herbal & homeopathic remedies:**

1) All Native Remedies products are manufactured according to the highest pharmaceutical standards - using only the best quality raw ingredients from nature's medicine chest.

2) Native Remedies and our suppliers are registered with the FDA as accredited suppliers and manufacturers of health supplements. Our products are sold all over the world and are manufactured to strict international standards in a GMP accredited manufacturing plant.

3) All our remedies are manufactured in an FDA registered pharmaceutical facility under close supervision.

This includes formulation, acquiring and testing of raw ingredients as well as final manufacturing. This gives us the confidence to say that when you are buying a Native Remedies product, you are buying the safest and the best! We know what goes into our remedies - which is why we know what you will get out of them!

4) Manufacturing is done strictly according to the principles of GMP (Good Manufacturing Practice) and all raw ingredients undergo stringent testing before being approved by our registered manufacturing pharmacists.

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While Western medicine has become the norm in many cultures, it is not the only treatment option. Conventional western medicine, often called allopathic medicine, is the system of medicine taught at most medical schools and most pharmaceutical and synthetic medicines are manufactured and marketed according to the principles of allopathic medicine. Allopathic medicine is also sometimes called orthodox medicine.

Because most of us in the Western world have grown up in a society in which allopathic medicine is the prevailing norm, we forget that, only a few decades ago, homeopathic, herbal and other natural medicines were commonly available – and freely used even by conventional doctors. While there are often heated debates about which system of medicine is ‘better’ than the other, many responsible doctors (whether they are allopathic or not) recognize that both have a role to play in the treatment program.

Natural medicine has often been frowned on by conventional doctors, especially by those who did not have sufficient knowledge of these medicines. However, it is encouraging to note that some medical schools are now beginning to re-introduce it into their course work, thereby providing doctors with a wider range of treatment options from which to choose. In many countries, especially in Europe, India and China, natural and homeopathic medicines are commonly prescribed by conventional doctors and represent a significant part of the total annual drug sales.

Naturopathy is a branch of medicine (just as allopathy is a branch of medicine) which operates according to the underlying philosophy that the body has an innate capacity to heal itself. While natural medicines are often called ‘alternative’ or ‘complimentary’ medicines, they are, in fact, a unique and independent form of medicine in their own right, well able to treat a variety of conditions. Perhaps the term ‘holistic’ medicine is more apt, given the broad range of treatment options and approaches which are to be found within the practice of natural medicine, which encompasses many different disciplines, including herbalism, homeopathy, iridology, osteopathy, chiropractic, therapeutic massage techniques, aromatherapy, acupuncture and many, many more.

Most naturopaths will use a variety of treatment modalities in order to treat their patients in a holistic way to support health, relieve symptoms and prevent future disease. In fact, even the World Health Organization defines health as being "... more than simply the absence of illness. It is the active state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being." This is a wonderfully clear description of holistic or natural medicine, which strives to support health (thereby relieving or preventing symptoms), rather than simply eliminating disease.

Although allopathic medicine certainly has a role to play and has made a tremendous contribution to medical science during the past century, there is a growing perception that it is not the only answer and that, in many cases, holistic medicine can accomplish just as much, if not more – without the risk of side effects, addiction and sacrifice to health so commonly associated with pharmaceutical drugs. Contrary to common perception, and provided that they are manufactured in the correct way, natural medicines can work quickly and safely to promote healing.

In many cases, they can succeed where pharmaceutical drugs have failed. Despite frequent reports that they are ‘unproven’ and ‘untested’, the opposite is true. Natural medicines have a long history of usage and there is a wealth of empirical evidence to support their effectiveness and safety. In addition, active clinical



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research is carried out by many academic hospitals and universities to support the extensive traditional and empirical evidence behind natural medicines.

It is also important to know that, like any medicine, herbal and homeopathic medicines must be manufactured in the correct way, following acceptable procedures and manufacturing methods to ensure maximum effectiveness and safety. Due to the recent rise in popularity of natural remedies, many companies have sprung up to take advantage of the market. Unfortunately not all of them are equipped to manufacture to the correct standards, often resulting in a flood of inferior (and sometimes even unsafe) remedies onto the market – and giving natural remedies a bad name.

Even some pharmaceutical companies have rushed to claim their market share by producing so-called ‘standardized’ extracts of herbs and offering these as superior to the tried and tested methods of naturopathic manufacturing. Nothing could be further from the truth. While ‘standardized’ extracts may offer benefit of easy consistency of dosage (and cheaper more efficient production lines), they have grave disadvantages. These include an increase in side effects as the medicines produced in this manner lose the natural protective properties of the herbs. In some cases, these side effects have proved fatal – as was seen in the liver toxicity associated with standardized extracts of kava kava, a herb previously safely used for generations without any known side effects.

Most naturopaths recommend what is called the Full Spectrum Method of extraction – which retains the benefits of ALL the active ingredients within the herb as opposed to isolating only one – thereby providing a more complete treatment as well as superior protection against side effects.

Whatever your choice, always choose wisely. Research what is best for you. If you have a chronic or life threatening condition, don’t make changes without first discussing them with your doctor in order that your condition may be monitored. Well informed and supportive practitioners will support patients who want to take responsibility for their own health.

In the treatment of depression, the following herbal and homeopathic remedies are often used as part of the treatment plan.

## **Related Natural Remedies:**

**MindSoothe**: Promote balanced mood and feelings of wellbeing

MindSoothe is a 100% safe, non-addictive, natural herbal remedy that has been especially formulated by a Clinical Psychologist for adults and teens, and comes in a compact capsule form, making it easy to take.

MindSoothe can be used to safely maintain emotional health, balanced mood and systemic harmony in the brain and nervous system, without harmful side effects.

This remedy contains a selection of herbs known for their calming and supportive function in maintaining brain and nervous system health, emotional balance and overall wellbeing.

[Learn more about MindSoothe](#)

**PureCalm:** Aids nervous system in stress resistance for balanced moods and feelings of well being

PureCalm is a 100% safe, non-addictive herbal remedy that has been specially formulated by a Clinical Psychologist for adults and children.

PureCalm can be used to safely maintain harmony, health and systemic balance in the brain and [nervous system](#), without harmful side effects and without sedatives. This remedy contains a selection of herbs known for their supportive role in maintaining brain function.

PureCalm can especially benefit those individuals needing support overcoming worry, managing stress and to promote inner calm related to certain situations. Natural stress relief products such as PureCalm can be used consistently, without side effects or compromising health.

[Learn more about PureCalm](#)

**Mood Tonic:** Optimizes nervous system health and promotes balanced mood and peacefulness

There are many options for supporting balanced mood naturally. Nature provides us with many natural mood tonics. Triple Complex Mood Tonic is a 100% natural combination of three cellular-supporting biochemic tissue salts especially selected for their positive effects on brain structures, brain chemistry, and nervous system health.

This combination of tissue salts can be used regularly in a general capacity to promote systemic and chemical balance in the brain and nervous system, as well as in conjunction with other remedies to maintain therapeutic effectiveness.

[Learn more about Mood Tonic](#)

**Calm Within CD:** Improve relaxation, support balanced emotions and stress levels

The Calm Within CD is composed by our Clinical Psychologist to promote good physical and emotional health using a specially developed therapeutic sound techniques and soothing music.

A combination of therapeutic script and nature's soothing sounds induce a state of deep relaxation, effectively relieving tension and supporting the body's natural ability to heal. In therapy with music that heals anxiety and depression such as nature's soothing sounds the listener is taken through a series of progressive relaxation steps, leading to a state of deep relaxation. Thereafter guided imagery is used to further enhance and expand therapeutic benefits.

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