

Boost your mood —naturally!

Got the blues? Taking an antidepressant isn't the only way to start feeling *great* again. Research has uncovered plenty of natural remedies—some as effective as drugs! Feel sunnier fast by:



1 Feeding your brain "happy" fat

In one study, six out of 10 people with depression who took 2,000 mg. daily of omega-3 fatty acids from fish oil supplements experienced significantly brighter moods. "Not only is omega-3 safe, it can be taken alongside prescription antidepressants if necessary. Some research even shows it makes these drugs more effective," says University of Texas Health Science Center professor Joan Engebretson, Dr.Ph., R.N.

designed light box for an hour each morning, Wegmann advises. (There are many reputable light-box manufacturers—Bio-Light, Sun-Box and Northern Light Technologies, to name a few.) For minor depression, spending half an hour daily in the sun may do the trick.

When to get help
If you've been feeling sad for more than two weeks and/or experience fatigue, a dip in your libido, a change in your appetite or thoughts of hurting yourself, see your doctor right away.

3 Trying the herb that's a match for medication

A review of 29 studies recently confirmed that St. John's wort often works as well as antidepressants!

"It causes the same mood-enhancing chemical changes in the brain as prescription meds," says Engebretson.

Rx: Experts typically recommend taking 300 mg. of St. John's wort three times a day.

IMPORTANT: Check with your doctor before taking this or any other supplement, especially if you are taking other medications, including antidepressants, or using other supplements.



4 Rev your feel-good hormones with SAME

It's an all-natural compound that increases the brain's production of two uplifting hormones: serotonin and dopamine. Widely used in Europe for decades, research suggests SAME (S-adenosylmethionine) works as well as St. John's wort for some people—and is also less likely to cause stomach upset than antidepressants.

Rx: Wegmann recommends taking 400 mg. of SAME (once a day, preferably in the morning—unless your doctor advises otherwise). Check with your pharmacist or doctor first, especially if you're taking other medications.

IMPORTANT: Don't combine SAME with St. John's wort because of possible interactions.

Outsmart depression with diet!

Not bothered by the blues? Here's one easy way to be sure you stay that way: Eat lots of fruits, vegetables, grains and healthy fats! A Spanish study of more than 12,000 people found that people who ate this "Mediterranean-style diet" were 30% less likely to become depressed than those who mostly ate other types of foods.

—Camille Noe Pagán

SURGERY-FREE BREAST LIFT!

Sure, push-up bras will give you a lift, but it's only temporary. And surgery is costly and painful. Luckily, there's an alternative that lasts forever and won't cost a dime: these easy exercises from Kristin McGee, creator of *Pilates for Beginners* DVD. They'll sculpt your chest, as well as the muscles underneath, to firm and boost your bust.



Bust-lifting twist

Stand with your feet slightly wider than hip-width apart and a weight in each hand. Bend your elbows and hold your arms up at shoulder height. Draw your shoulders back and pretend you're pinching a grapefruit between your shoulder blades. Bend your knees and twist to the right. Come back to center, then twist to the left. Repeat 10 times. Do 3 sets.



Chest-sculpting push-up

Stand in front of a sturdy table, feet hip-width apart and place your hands shoulder-width apart on the surface. Walk your feet back until your body forms a straight line. Keep your shoulders down and back. Pull your abs toward your spine. Bend your elbows out to the sides and lower your body down toward the table. Work up to 10 times. Do 3 sets.

Photos: Media Bakery; Arco Images GmbH/Alamy; HBB. Hair and makeup: Tanya Bruhwiler. Expert: AcaciaLifestyle.com.