



OPTIMAL NEUROTRANSMITTER FUNCTION OPTIMAL BODY BALANCE

Eliminating Cravings Through Neurotransmitter Balance

Neurotransmitters are a class of chemical messengers in the body that help regulate many body functions. Most people have heard of several common neurotransmitters, including serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine and epinephrine (also known as adrenaline) and are familiar with some of their functions in regards to mood and sleep. What many people do not know is that your neurotransmitter balance may dramatically affect your ability to lose and maintain your weight.

Cravings & Addictions

Neurotransmitters not only regulate your mood and hormone levels, they also directly impact your appetite, cravings and sleep. More specifically, if your serotonin levels are low, not only will your mood suffer, you will also be much more likely to crave carbohydrates, especially in the mid-afternoon and evening. This will make it particularly difficult to lose weight, because your will power is no match for your brain chemistry and you will eventually 'blow' a diet and give into the cravings.

Once more, low dopamine levels can cause bingeing behavior, and are at the root of many addictive-type behaviors - including addictions to various foods, alcohol, drugs, and actions - all of which will thwart any attempt at losing weight through traditional weight loss methods. In addition, low dopamine levels will dramatically increase your appetite, so you will want to (and eventually will) eat more than your bodily needs warrant, causing you to gain weight.





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Causes of Neurotransmitter Imbalance

Neurotransmitter imbalances can be caused by many different factors, including:

Food intolerances

Stress

Toxic burden

Sleep disturbances

Drug use

Alcohol

Digestive imbalances

Dietary deficiencies

Genetics

Medication use, including antidepressants, anti-anxiety, sleep and migraine medications

Therefore, one of the keys to determining how to correct the underlying imbalances is to determine each individual's unique cause(s) of imbalance and addressing them.

Eliminating Cravings and Reducing Appetite = Neurotransmitter Balance

The key to being able to reduce and eliminate your cravings and appetite is often found in rebalancing your neurotransmitters. This begins with identifying if any of the factors above are at the root of your imbalances so we can prevent further depletion. Next, we must give the body the nutrients it needs to restore your neurotransmitter levels.

Neurotransmitters are made in the body from specific amino acids and cofactors, like B-vitamins, selenium, and other vitamins and minerals. Given the right proportions of each of these nutrients at the right time, the body will make the neurotransmitters it needs.

Testing for Neurotransmitter Imbalance

We often use a very powerful test, called a **Metabolic Profile Plus Fatty Acid Bloodspot**, that identifies each individual's specific needs for B-vitamins, nutrients involved in cellular energy production, neurotransmitter metabolism, nutrients involved in detoxification, markers for gastrointestinal flora (dysbiosis) imbalance, essential fatty acids balance, free radical and antioxidant status. It is a wonderful test that can be performed in the comfort of your own home and sent in. Once we get the results, we review them with you over the phone and give you recommendations to address any imbalances present.



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DBS testing – this at home urine test allows us to fine tune your **amino acid therapy** to achieve proper neurotransmitter function. Before taking this test, be sure you have taken the recommended amounts of amino acids for at least 7 days without missing a dose; failure to do so will result in erroneous results. Your results will be sent to you and an appointment will be made to discuss the results with one of our staff. If you are not interested in doing testing to determine your exact imbalances we have used several formulas with great success in helping people rebalancing their neurotransmitter levels naturally. For more information on testing and non-testing options, please contact us by phone (608.274.7044) or email (customer@naturalpathhealthcenter.com).

By identifying and addressing your neurotransmitter levels you can effectively and efficiently control your cravings and appetite in addition to eliminating depression, helping improve your quality of sleep and rebalancing your hormone levels.

The Dirty Dozen — Food Additives

Including something new in a food isn't always a good idea, especially when it comes to your health. Here are 12 additives to subtract from your diet

Sodium Nitrate (also called Sodium Nitrite) This is a preservative, coloring, and flavoring commonly added to bacon, ham, hot dogs, luncheon meats, smoked fish, and corned beef. Studies have linked eating it to various types of cancer.

BHA and BHT Butylated hydroxyanisole and butylated hydroxytoluene are used to preserve common household foods. They are found in cereals, chewing gum, potato chips, and vegetable oils. They are oxidants, which form potentially cancer-causing reactive compounds in your body.

Propyl Gallate Another preservative, often used in conjunction with BHA and BHT. It is sometimes found in meat products, chicken soup base, and chewing gum. Animal studies have suggested that it could be linked to cancer.

Monosodium Glutamate (MSG) MSG is an amino acid used as a flavor enhancer in soups, salad dressings, chips, frozen entrees, and restaurant food. It can cause headaches and nausea, and animal studies link it to damaged nerve cells in the brains of infant mice.

Trans-Fats and Polyunsaturated Fats Trans-fats are proven to cause heart disease. Restaurants, especially fast food chains, often serve foods laden with trans-fats. They are also found in highly processed foods. Polyunsaturated fats are very easily damaged with heat and light, turning rancid. The following oils should be avoided: soy, canola, sunflower, safflower, cottonseed, and walnut.

Aspartame Aspartame, also known by the brand names Nutrasweet and Equal, is a sweetener found in so-called diet foods such as low-calorie desserts, gelatins, drink mixes, and soft drinks. It may cause cancer or neurological problems, such as dizziness or hallucinations.

Acesulfame-K This is a relatively new artificial sweetener found in baked goods, chewing gum, and gelatin desserts. There is a general concern that testing on this product has been scant, and some studies show the additive may cause cancer in rats.

Food Colorings Blue 1, 2; Red 3; Green 3; Yellow 6 - Five food colorings still on the market are linked with cancer in animal testing. Blue 1 and 2, found in beverages, candy, baked goods and pet food, have been linked to cancer in mice. Red 3, used to dye cherries, fruit cocktail, candy, and baked goods, has been shown to cause thyroid tumors

in rats. Green 3, added to candy and beverages, has been linked to bladder cancer. The widely used yellow 6, added to beverages, sausage, gelatin, baked goods, and candy, has been linked to tumors of the adrenal gland and kidney.

Olestra Olestra, a synthetic fat found in some potato chip brands, can cause severe diarrhea, abdominal cramps, and gas. Olestra also inhibits healthy vitamin absorption from fat-soluble carotenoids that are found in fruits and vegetables.

Potassium Bromate Potassium bromate is used as an additive to increase volume in some white flour, breads, and rolls. It is known to cause cancer in animals, and even small amounts in bread can create a risk for humans.

White Sugar Watch out for foods with added sugars, such as baked goods, cereals, crackers, sauces and many other processed foods. It is unsafe for your health, and promotes bad nutrition.

Sodium Chloride A dash of sodium chloride, more commonly known as salt, can bring flavor to your meal. But too much salt can be dangerous for your health, leading to high blood pressure, heart attack, stroke, and kidney failure.

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Foods and Substances that **Deplete** Neurotransmitters

Drugs that Deplete Neurotransmitters

Anti-Depressants (SSRI), Luvox, Zoloft, Prozac, Celexa, Paxil, Trazadone (Deseryl), Sinequan (Doxepin), Serzone, Effexor, Meridia, Phendimetrazin (Bontril), Phentermine (Adipex), Phenylpropanolamine (Dextramine), Tenuate, Mazindol, Fenfluramine (Racemic), D-fenfluramine, Amphetamines (Ritalin), Ephedra, Caffeine, Alcohol, Nicotine, Imitrex, Zomig, Maxalt, Amerge, Amitriptyline (Elavil), Nortyptiline (Normramin), Remeron, Wellbutrin (Zyban), Thioridazine (Mylan), Frequent use of barbiturates, Frequent use of recreational drugs

Foods that Deplete Neurotransmitters

Coffee, Cheese, Chocolate, Citrus Fruits, Tomatoes, Potatoes, Strawberries, Eggs, Onions, Mustard, Shellfish, Alcoholic Beverages, MSG, Anything strongly cultured or fermented, Meat tenderizers, Salad bars that spray with sulfites, Aspartame, Saccharin, Smoked/Cured Meats, Cold Cuts containing Nitrates, Food Preservatives, Tempeh, Tofu, Tamari Nuts and Nut Butters, Chemically processed decaffeinated coffee, Wheat

Other Substances that Deplete Neurotransmitters

Paint and other chemical fumes, Excessive exposure to fluorescent lighting

Foods that **Promote** Neurotransmitter Synthesis

Serotonin (& Melatonin) Salmon, Turkey, Chicken, Lean Meat, Soy Protein, Brown Rice, Brewer's Yeast, Avocados, Almonds, Peanuts, Walnuts, Hazelnuts, Seaweed, Oats, Rice, Bran, Cottage Cheese, Yogurt, Sunflower Seeds, Wheat Germ, Whole Grains, Broccoli, Ginger, Onions, Asparagus, Kale, Bananas, Dates, Figs, Pear, Peaches, Apricots, Strawberries, Blueberries, Flaxseed, Leafy Green Vegetables, Cherries

Dopamine & Norepinephrine

Almonds, Avocados, Bananas, Lima Beans, Pumpkin Seeds, Sesame Seeds, Chicken, Turkey, Fish, Tofu, Lentils, Garlic, Onions, Soybeans, Seeds, Yogurt

