

# The Well Being's Herbal Allies Workshop Series



## BEATING THE BLUES - MANAGING ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION DURING THE HOLIDAYS

NOVEMBER 2, 2019

# Beating the Blues

## Managing Anxiety and Depression during the Holidays



# The “Blues” vs. Depression

## THE HOLIDAY BLUES

The “blues” is a feeling of sadness resulting from an event that over time diminishes. It is a normal reaction to a traumatic event

## DEPRESSION

Depression is a persistent condition, kind of like a cloud that hangs over your head that you can't get rid of, that lasts for a longer period of time and prevents a person from enjoying life or functioning in daily activities

[www.CenterForTheWellBeing.org](http://www.CenterForTheWellBeing.org)

**EMOTIONAL**  
persistent sad or empty mood, anxiety, mood swings, suicidal thoughts or possible attempts, and sense of helplessness/hopelessness

### PHYSICAL

too little or too much sleep, overeating or appetite loss, irregular menstrual cycle, gradual loss of sexual desire and chronic fatigue and lack of energy

### BEHAVIORAL

crying for no apparent reason withdrawal from people and social situations, unmotivated, disinterest in one's physical appearance and reduced ability to cope

# Depression: Causes and Treatment

## CAUSES OF DEPRESSION

### BIOLOGICAL

too much of certain brain chemicals called neurotransmitters

### COGNITIVE

low self-esteem and negative or “stinkin thinkin”

### GENDER

women experience depression twice as much as men

### GENETICS

family history passed down through our genes

### SITUATIONAL

difficult life events life death, divorce or job loss

### MEDICATIONS

some have side effects

## WAYS TO TREAT DEPRESSION

- psychotherapy (talk therapies)
- medication
- a combination of both

Remember: If taking antidepressants, they must be taken daily for 3-4 weeks, and in some cases, up to 8 weeks before seeing any improvement in affect

# Ways to Cope with Depression



## Coping Strategies

- ❖ Take responsibility for being compliant with treatment recommendations and deal with denial about it
- ❖ Take things one day at time and be patient with yourself
- ❖ Avoid isolating yourself from others, especially loved ones
- ❖ Practice healthy eating habits and exercise regularly
- ❖ Be consistent with sleeping patterns
- ❖ Make realistic goals, manage expectations and take small steps towards them

Remember, it's a process and change typically doesn't happen overnight

# Tips for Less Stress for the Holidays

## Causes for Holiday Stress

- Not setting a budget
- Impulsive or binge spending
- Being in a new or unfamiliar family setting
- Emotional memories from past often triggered during holidays
- Trying to do too much during the holidays
- Setting unrealistic expectations

## Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress

- Plan ahead and be organized
- Self-care
- Plan some down time and relax
- Remember the true meaning of holidays
- Be prepared for holiday family interactions
- Meeting someone else's needs is great way to reduce stress and generate positive feelings



# Managing Anxiety and Depression Naturally

**Anxiety and depression often occur simultaneously and should be considered when treating either one**

## 🌿 Diet 🌿

- Focus on a general anti-inflammatory diet that promotes balance blood sugar, eat plenty of omega-3 fatty acids from salmon, trout, mackerel or for vegetarian options: hemp, flax, chia, eggs
- Add Turmeric, oatmeal, green tea, Vitamin B Complex supplement to nourish the nervous system

## 🌿 Lifestyle 🌿

- Regular exercise is THE MOST EFFECTIVE antidepressant
- Address stress factors, poor sleep habits, lack of community connections

## 🌿 Herbs 🌿

- Adaptogens and nervines excel in alleviating depression
- Beware of stimulating herbs if you're prone to anxiety
- Beware of sedatives if you're overly sluggish



**\*If you take pharmaceuticals, seek professional guidance before adding any herbs**

# Calming Herbs



## Lavender (*Lavandula officinalis*)

Strong Nervine-Mild Antidepressant

- Good for headaches, tension, stress, insomnia, soothes insect bites and bee stings -
- Add small amounts to herbal tea -
- Add essential oil to bathwater, dab 2-3 drops to nape of neck for headaches, add to mister to spray pillows and bedroom -

## Chamomile (*Matricaria recutia*)

Gentle Nervine-Anti-inflammatory

- Used in 3 major areas: immune, nervous, digestion -
- Drink tea to calm digestion (colic in babies) or to calm a nervous child or adult -
- Add infusion to bath water -
- Mist hydrosol on face to soothes itchy skin and calmness -



# Tinctures for Anxiety and Depression



# Managing Depression with St. John's Wort



## St. John's Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*)

### KEY PROPERTIES

Alleviates mild to moderate depression and Seasonal Affective Disorder with an action akin to selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) like Prozac, without the side effects

### ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

Nerve tonic for stress, nerve damage, pain, healing, mood-related neurotransmitter function, improves liver's ability to clear toxins

### CAUTIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

Incredibly safe, however, can interact with many medications

- May increase blood pressure (stimulant)
- Don't use while pregnant or nursing
- May cause photosensitivity (rare)
- Used alone is not likely to lift major depression, but neither are SSRI pharmaceuticals

# Herbs for Managing Anxiety

## Scullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*)

Sedative-Nervine

Sedates the nervous system, particularly used for insomnia, anxiety, hyperactivity, agitation, sensory overload - when hypersensitive to lights, smells, sounds, touch, etc.

\*May be too sedating for daytime use; may interact with psych and pain pharmaceuticals.



## Passionflower (*Passiflora incarnata*)

Sedative-Nervine

Sedative effects similar to Scullcap for relieving insomnia, anxiety, agitation, irritability in adults and children; gently relaxes all body systems, good for stress-induced hypertension and respiratory herbs for asthma and anxiety-provoking lung issues

\*May be too sedating for daytime use; may interact with psych and pain pharmaceuticals.



## Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*)

Nervine

Calms without sedating, improves cognition and mood. Children and adults can use for mild mood funks, anxiety, insomnia, nervous indigestion, restlessness, inattention, mental decline, hyperactivity



# Lemon Balm Transformation - Garden to Tincture -



## HERBS

Passionflower  
Lemon Balm  
Scullycap  
Peppermint

## DIRECTIONS

Pour 1 cup of boiling water  
over 1 teaspoon herbal tea.  
Steep for 10-15 minutes.  
Drink a cup as needed.  
\*May cause drowsiness

# Bye-Bye AnxieTEA

