

Diet and Depression: Lifestyle Tips to Banish the Blues

There's good reason to not reach for the ice cream and doughnuts next time you're feeling blue.

A penchant for fries, baked goods and other fast food could lead to more than obesity, say experts, with researchers finding regular junk food consumption can increase the risk for depression*.

With the disorder affecting more than one million Australians** and 121 million people globally, sufferers, researchers and nutritionists alike are looking to essential nutrients such as B vitamins and Omega-3 fatty acid sources, which are thought to play a critical role in preventing depression.

Nutritionist, naturopath and herbalist Janella Purcell says depression and anxiety may also be signs of an overly acidic system, most often caused by lifestyle choices. The acid-alkaline balance is very important to our overall health and our diet can affect this balance greatly. When this balance is tipped to acidic, minerals are depleted, making the body susceptible to inflammation and associated diseases including mental health disorders.

“One of the best things we can do to correct an overly acid body is to clean up our diet and lifestyle,” Purcell says. “Generally, an alkaline diet will include most fruits, green vegetables, peas, beans, lentils, spices, herbs and seasonings, and seeds and nuts. All melons are alkalizing.”

“As I see in my clinic, those who are most acidic are often the most busy... juggling family life with work schedules and eating on the run. If a busy routine is one of the reasons for eating poorly, one of the best ways to help put nutrition and eating habits back on track is with wholefood supplementation. It's what you add in—especially when you start to make positive changes to the diet—that can really help turn things around.”

The television chef and author recommends only clean, nutritionally dense and sustainable wholefood supplements, such as those produced by ethical company, Lifestream.

“If someone is facing depression and knows their diet is playing a role, I recommend supporting the everyday diet through some nutrient dense supplements, such as Aloe Vera Juice, Natural B Complex Powder, Essential Greens+, Natural Magnesium and V-Omega3. While wonderful taken separately, together these help to heal the gut and nervous system while flooding the body with antioxidants and nutrition therefore helping the body to become less acidic and inflamed.”

Purcell says greens are also highly recommended to support liver detoxification.

Janella's Lifestyle Tips for Depression Prevention

Make time to nurture yourself. Food and eating isn't just about fuel. Letting go and allowing it to be a positive and guilt-free experience can be very healing;

Start the day well with a smoothie that contains nutritional support from one or all of Lifestream Aloe Vera Juice, Natural B Complex, Essential Greens+, Natural Magnesium and two V-Omega3 capsules per day;

Exercise moderately and regularly;

Reduce stress: Do what makes you happy, as much as possible;

Practise mindful eating. Eating quickly or insufficient chewing and multi-tasking tend to make us eat too fast and too much, causing oxidative stress. Chewing alkalises food;

Eat more fresh, organic veggies;

Seek out professional help to support you on a journey to wellness that encompasses your physical, emotional and mental health—they impact on each other.

Avoid

White flour, sugar and heavily refined products including junk foods. Excessive sugar consumption increases blood lactate levels, which is acid-forming;

Chemicals in your food, factory farmed, unsustainable animal products and packaged food. Go organic!

Aspartame and other artificial sweeteners;

Too much caffeine, especially instant coffee. Organic (and fair trade) is much less acidic;

Processed and refined salt;

Too much alcohol.

“In order to have a better chance at being free of that black cloud called depression – keep your body, mind and spirit as healthy as you can, as much as you can,” Purcell says. “Do this by keeping your liver happy so it can aid in the elimination of free radicals; keep your gut clear by regularly detoxing and eating well; exercise, and avoid the things that create acid especially emotional stress.”

* A 2012 study by the Department of Clinical Sciences at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria and the Department of Preventative Medicine and Public Health at the University of Navarra in Pamplona. The findings also showed even small quantities of nutritionally devoid foods were linked to a much higher risk of depression. The a study of almost 9,000 adults, those who regularly ate fast food such as hamburgers and pizza were 40 percent more likely to develop depression than those who consumed little to none of these foods—that risk steadily rose as more junk food was eaten. None of the participants had been diagnosed with depression, or taken antidepressants, before the study.

** <http://www.whitecloudfoundation.org/depression-facts>

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ABOUT LIFESTREAM

Before spirulina and aloe vera were household names, Lifestream produced these two highest quality, best-selling natural vegan supplements—and as a result, cemented its reputation as market leaders and innovators in these two categories.

Since then, Lifestream’s entire product range has followed suit, with the highest quality ingredients chosen to foster health and wellbeing. Lifestream has always produced clean, green and 100% natural, vegetarian and vegan-friendly products. Their uncompromising commitment to such excellence has resulted in a high level of loyalty with our customers. For 30 years, Lifestream, which is distributed in Australia by Planet Health, has embodied purity, consistency, quality and integrity.

Lifestream’s extensive range encompasses ultimate nutrition, energy, antioxidants, bowel and digestive health, immunity, joint and bone health, and omegas. Products include: Chlorella, Barley Grass, Wheat Grass, Natural Calcium, Ultimate Greens, V-Omega 3 and others. See entire product range [here](#).

ABOUT JANELLA

A sought-after naturopath, nutritionist, medical herbalist, iridologist and chef, Purcell has been a regular on Australian television with appearances on

Masterchef, and as the "good chef" on Good Chef, Bad Chef. She is also a regular contributor, columnist for many of Australia's best-loved magazines including Nourish, Woman's Day and Good Medicine magazines.

As an author, Janella has three best-selling books, including Eating for the Seasons, which won the "best health and nutrition" category at the International Gourmand Awards. Janella's Wholefood Kitchen was also shortlisted for the prestigious award. She will release her fourth book this year.

Janella has combined her vast knowledge of food and nutrition to create a multi-disciplined approach to health and wellbeing. Dedicated to a core philosophy of food as medicine, Janella teaches how to get the most out of our meals – and how to avoid the pitfalls. She has been working with wholefoods since childhood and honing special diets for the past 15 years.

Besides her wholefood workshops, media appearances and online work, Janella can be found consulting with clients at her Natural Food and Medicine Store in Sydney's Surry Hills, as well as from her clinic in Bangalow, Northern New South Wales.

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