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The Best Ways To Beat Depression

Beyond the Blues Recognize that a depressive disorder is more than the blues. Without treatment, depression can last for weeks, months, even years. The first step is to see your primary care physician.

Diagnosis Is Key

A big reason to head to the doc: Some medications and medical conditions can cause symptoms that seem like depression. Your doctor will work to rule out these possibilities.

How to Find Support

If you don't have a primary care doctor, talk with a nurse, social worker, or religious counselor. Ask him or her for a recommendation on where to get help. Or look under "mental health," "social services," and "hotlines." A community mental health center also can be a great resource. Or call the free, 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 800-273-TALK (8255).

Talk It Out

People with mild depression may do well with only psychotherapy. Most people with moderate to severe do best with a combination of psychotherapy and medication. The medication quickly relieves symptoms; while therapy helps you cope with life's problems.

Medications Help

Antidepressants work to normalize the naturally occurring chemicals in the brain. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) are the newest and most popular types. SSRIs tend to have fewer side effects than older types of antidepressants.

Be Patient

Most people can find an antidepressant that works for them--but it may take some trial and error. And it usually takes at least six weeks of taking the medication regularly to see the full effect.

Relationships Matter

While you're recovering, reconnect with friends. Confide in someone you trust. Let others help you.

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Aspirin Every Other Day May Prevent Colon Cancer

Many students have touted the benefits of aspirin, and the latest one has good news for women. This new research shows that low-dose aspirin may serve as a protection against colorectal cancer. The study was based on a long-term trail in a large group of women who have been underrepresented in studies on this topic. This builds on a significant body of research showing the potential preventative properties of aspirin in many cancers such as melanoma. This study did not find a strong link between aspirin and preventing any other kinds of cancer during the 18-year period, however none of this means aspirin is right for everyone. Always consult a doctor before starting a new medical routine.

The Study:
The study included nearly 40,000 women 45 and older. About 34,000 participated in the follow-up. Researchers followed the women for up to 18 years from the start of the study.

The study participants were randomly assigned to either take 100 milligrams of aspirin or a placebo every other day. The alternative-day strategy was intended to reduce the side effects of aspirin. Some participants also took vitamin E on the nonaspirin days, the others took a placebo.

The results:
In the first ten years, the researchers did not find an association between aspirin use and colorectal cancer, there seemed to be no benefits over taking a placebo. But women who were following for longer than 10 years, “the benefits of taking aspirin became clear. Between 10 to 18 years after the start of the study, researchers observed a 42% reduction in colorectal cancer in the group that was taking aspirin, relative to the women who were not. That average out to about a 20% reduction over the length of the study.
Aspirin Every Other Day May Prevent Colon Cancer (cont.)

Researchers did not find that age or the factors were significantly associated with the study result. Socioeconomic status was balanced between the group taking aspirin and those received placebos.

Other studies have also found a delayed effect in aspirin’s prevention properties. Cancer usually takes about 10 years to develop from its early stages. It’s possible that aspirin delays the formation of polyps. Some studies have suggested that higher doses of aspirin have a shorter, latent period—in other words, less time passes before the preventative benefits are seen. On the downside, women taking aspirin were more likely to develop gastrointestinal bleeding and peptic ulcers, based on the information that women reported about themselves.

The researchers did not find any cardiovascular benefits to taking aspirin every other day, contrary to the preventative properties of aspirin against heart attack and stroke that have been found in many other studies, especially in men. Similarly, although other studies have found that aspirin may prevent other kinds of cancers, this study did not find associations with any other kind of cancer. This could also be because of the low dose, but more research would need to be done to confirm. No benefit to the Vitamin E, taken every day, was observed.

Conclusion:
This study adds to a large body of research that already established this potential of aspirin to prevent colon cancer, which had mostly been shown in men. This study highlights the drug’s protective potential in women. Those with an elevated risk of the disease—for instance a family of colorectal cancer, or frequent polyps—should consider aspirin.

Source: http://thechart.blogs.cnn.com/

Cat Allergy Research Offers New Clues

Scientists have discovered how allergies to cat are trigged, raising hopes of preventative medicine.

A University of Cambridge team has identified how the body’s immune system detects cat allergen, leading to symptoms such as coughing and sneezing.

New treatment to block this pathway raises hopes of developing medicines to protect sufferers. Researchers led by Dr. Clare Bryant of the University of Cambridge studied proteins found in particles of cat skin, known as cat dander, which is the most common cause of cat allergy. They found that cat allergen activates a specific pathway in the body, once in the presence of a common bacterial toxin.

This triggers a large immune response in allergy sufferers, causing symptoms such as coughing, wheezing, sneezing and runny nose.

By understanding the triggering mechanism, there are now drugs that have been designed that are in clinical for other conditions, such as sepsis, that could potentially then be used in a different way to treat cat allergy and prevent cat allergy.

The charity Allergy UK said the research, published in Journal of Immunology, was a big step forward in understanding how cat allergen causes such severe allergic reactions.

Cat allergen is particularly difficult to avoid as it is a ‘sticky’ molecule that is carried into every building on people’s shoes and clothes.

It can also still be found in a home, on the walls and ceiling or fittings, even a few years after a cat has ceased to live there.

Source: http://www.bbc.co.uk/
What Causes ADHD: Myths vs. Facts

Countless theories exist about what causes Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder in children. What is true and myth about the causes?

Sugar: Myth
Sugar is not a cause of ADHD. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, studies have been conducted on this very topic and found no link. Researchers have studied behavior and learning capability with children who have taken varying amounts of sugar, sugar substitute and placebos and found no link.

Anesthesia Exposure: Fact
A study found that children who had been repeatedly exposed to anesthetic at a young age were twice as likely to develop ADHD. If a child had undergone anesthesia more than two times before the age of three, the risk of ADHD doubled. The research found that the risk does not change with one exposure to anesthesia, but a second exposure jumped the ADHD incidence from 7.3 percent to 17.9 percent.

Birthday: Myths
A study found that ADHD is actually over-diagnosed in the youngest children. As ADHD is diagnosed largely by behavior, less mature students were often labeled as having ADHD. The study examined one million children and found that children born in the last month of school enrollment eligibility were 48 percent more likely to be diagnosed with ADHD than children born at the beginning of the year.

Genetics: Fact
A 2010 study out of Cardiff University (UK) discovered that there is a genetic element to ADHD. Researchers found that children with a specific genetic segment either duplicated or missing were twice as likely to have ADHD.

Bad Parenting: Myth
Numerous studies found that, though environmental factors can influence the prevalence, ADHD is not "caused" by bad parenting.

Post –Term Children: Fact
According to a 2012 study, children born "post-term" – after 42 weeks as opposed to the standard 40 – are more likely to have behavioral problems, including ADHD. Theories exist that link the ADHD to insufficient oxygen and nutrients from the placenta after the "placental clock" has gone beyond the normal duration of pregnancy.

Large Birth Size: Myth
During the 2012 study to investigate post-term births, one of the control items was for babies over 4,000 grams. When studying this theory, no correlation was found between a heavy birth weight and ADHD.

Second Hand Smoke: Fact
A 2010 study showed a link between second hand smoke and the prevalence of ADHD. The study found that there were significantly higher rates of ADHD, headaches and stuttering among children exposed to secondhand smoke than those who are not exposed.

Source: http://www.healthcentral.com