

Concerned About Depression, Stress or Anxiety? Read This!

Depression, Stress and Anxiety

Depression is a state of gloom, sadness and lethargy that lasts for more than just a few days. It is more than just 'the blues'.

Anxiety brings on a combination of feelings. You may experience fear, nervousness, restlessness and/or apprehensiveness.

Stress is a state of emotional strain often brought on by overwork, emotional pressures, or a host of physiological or psychological factors.

Description

Adjustment disorders – resulting from a death, life change or similar event, with feelings of tenseness, sadness, or overwhelming anger.

Bipolar disorder (Manic-depressive disorder) – occurring with recurrent episodes of depression and elation (mania).

Seasonal affective disorder – a pattern of depression that is related to changes in the seasons and the consequent lack of sunlight. It may cause headaches, irritability and a lack of energy.

Depression affects your thoughts, feelings, behaviour and mood and as a result your physical health too. If it is left untreated it can destroy your life. This is unfortunately all too common as many people either do not recognise their illness, or feel unable to seek help and therefore try to deal with it alone.

The Elderly

Depression can affect the elderly as well as the young. Older people tend to hide low feelings more, not realising that biological changes may account for their depressive state.

Brain-images show us that areas of the brain responsible for mood regulation and thought may fail to work properly if brain chemicals and neurotransmitters are out of balance.

Chronic illness, emotional factors, e.g. the death of a friend or

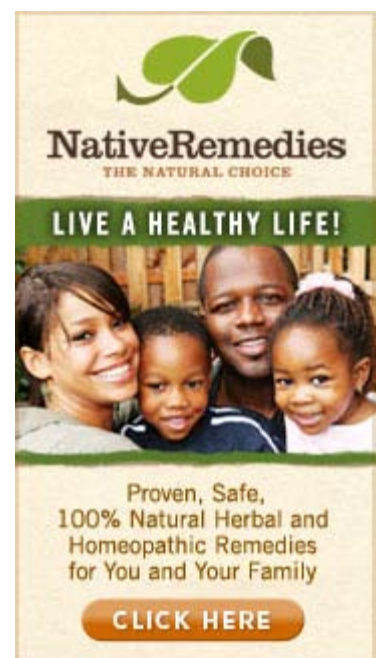
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partner, changes in living circumstances and changing fitness levels all contribute to states of depression in older people.

Anxiety Disorder

There is a big difference between anxiety and 'anxiety disorder'. It is normal to have feelings of anxiety or worry at various times in your life. It is part of your 'fight or flight' response that keeps you from danger and helps in decision making.

If these feelings grow and interfere with your daily life however, where your mind has trouble distinguishing between the normal anxiety of life and an irrational fear, you may be suffering from anxiety disorder.

Types of Anxiety Disorder include:

- **Generalized anxiety disorder (where you worry and feel anxious most of the time. You may forget why, or simply not know why.)**
- Obsessive compulsive disorder
- **Depression**
- Panic disorder, and
- **Phobias**
- Stress

Like anxiety, stress is a normal physical response to danger. It is this reaction that helps us make decisions and react quickly in circumstances needing attention. Your body releases cortisol and adrenaline hormones to help you do this as part of your "fight or flight" response.

Problems dealing with stress however are increasingly common in modern lives. Troublesome stress is when the body has difficulty distinguishing between the normal physiological occurrence and a lingering irrational reaction causing an overload of chemicals and hormones. It is important to differentiate between these.

Examples of common stress triggers include:

- **The death of someone close**
- Divorce
- **Separation**
- Injury or illness
- **Job loss**
- A major change in life circumstance

Excess stress has been proven to raise your cholesterol levels! It can also cause increased nerve growth factor (NGF) release, which inhibits the activity of disease-fighting cells, leading to chronic illness.

Hypertension, heart attacks, gout, diabetes, asthma, chronic pain, allergies, headache, backache, various skin disorders and immune

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system weakness can all occur as a result of stress.

Statistics

- **18.8 million Americans suffer from a depressive illness every year.**
- Around 1 in 20 adults will suffer an anxiety disorder in their lifetime.
- **Anxiety disorder is more common if you are unemployed, at home, separated, divorced or widowed.**
- It is now estimated that 80-90% of all disease is stress-related.
- **Stress is more powerful than diet in influencing cholesterol levels.**

Causes

Many years ago, when food was wholesome and home grown, you would have been able to get all essential nutrients from your diet. Now however soils are depleted, over-farming and over-processed foods are commonplace and those nutrients are no longer readily available.

Toxic pesticides and hormones are widely used, stripping your food of nutrient content. Many people suffer massive deficiencies, and **incidences of depression and similar states have risen dramatically as a result.**

Genetic inheritance and/or vulnerability, environmental factors and physical illnesses are also common triggers of an imbalance in brain chemicals that lead to depression (imbalances can occur in serotonin, norepinephrine and dopamine neurotransmitters).

Medications, such as those used in the treatment of high blood pressure, sleeping pills, alcohol, nicotine and mood-altering drugs are all big contributing factors.

In the elderly heart problems, low thyroid activity, a general increase in prescription medications like beta-blockers and heart drugs (digoxin, steroids and sedatives) can all trigger depression.

Certain personality traits showing low self-esteem and dependency are also prone to stress and anxiety, and illnesses such as heart disease, strokes, diabetes, cancer and Alzheimer's disease all put you at a higher risk of developing depressive conditions.

As well as biological factors, causes of stress can include:

- **Pressures at work**



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- Money worries Family conflicts
- **Divorce**
- Bereavement
- **Unemployment**
- Moving house
- **Alcohol or drug abuse**
- A build up of minor irritations

A major factor in many cases of depression is the lack of 'active' serotonin. This is often due to a deficiency of methylating agents such as SAME in the body. If serotonin is not [methylated](#) it becomes inactive thus leading to a state of depression.

Signs & Symptoms

Depressive symptoms

- **Loss of interest in everyday activities**
- Sleep disturbances
- **Impaired thinking**
- Weight loss or gain
- **Slow body movements**
- Fatigue
- **Low self-esteem**
- Loss of sexual interest
- **Hopelessness and pessimism**
- Worthlessness
- **Loss of interest in activities**
- Restlessness and irritability

Physical symptoms of depression can include:

- **Generalized Itching**
- Blurred vision
- **Excessive sweating**
- Dry mouth
- **Gastrointestinal problems (indigestion, constipation and diarrhea)**
- Headache and backache
- **Anxiety symptoms**

These can include the above, plus any of the following:

- **Uncontrollable feelings of persistent worrying**
- Restlessness and difficulty relaxing
- **Difficulty in concentrating**
- Feeling shaky
- **Restless sleep**

Physical symptoms of anxiety can include:

- **Headaches**
- Joint pains
- **Breathlessness**
- Palpitations
- **Tightness in your chest**
- Dry mouth
- **Sweating**
- Flushing
- **Nausea**
- Stomach pains
- **Increased heart rate**
- Feeling dizzy or light-headed
- **Paranoia**
- Stress symptoms

These can either be physical or psychological, or both, and can include:

- **Shakiness**
- Hyperventilation
- **Vomiting**
- Irritability
- **Anxiety**
- Irrational behaviour
- **Loss of appetite or comfort eating**
- Increased smoking, drinking or recreational drug taking

Physical effects include:

- **Excessive tiredness**
- Skin problems
- **Aches and pains**
- Heart palpitations

Conventional Treatments

Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs)

- **Fluoxetine**
- Paroxetine
- **Sertraline citalopram**
- Escitalopram

These work by increasing the availability of the neurotransmitter serotonin in your brain.

Drugs similar to SSRIs include Serotonin and Norepinephrine Reuptake Inhibitors (SNRIs):

- **Nefazodone**
- Trazodone

Venlafaxine

- Dopamine Reuptake Inhibitors E.G. Bupropion.

Side effects of SSRIs include nausea, dizziness, or dry mouth, sexual-function side effects, impotence and menstrual changes.

Tricyclic and tetracyclic antidepressants

- **Amitriptyline**
- Desipramine
- **Nortriptyline**
- Protriptyline
- **Trimipramine**
- a combination of Perphenazine and Amitriptyline

They work by inhibiting the reuptake of noradrenaline and serotonin.

Side effects can include dry mouth, constipation, urinary retention, blurred vision and increased heart rate, ringing in the ears, muscular pains, gastric irritation, weight change, allergic skin reactions and jaundice, cardiovascular effects, hormonal effects and potential for dependence.

Monoamine Oxidase Inhibitors (MAOIs)

- **Phenelzine**
- Tranylcypromine

They prevent the breakdown of neurotransmitters by blocking monoamine oxidation.

Side effects include difficulty getting to sleep, dizziness, light-headedness and fainting, dry mouth, blurred vision and appetite changes, high blood pressure and changes in heart rate and rhythm, muscle twitching and feelings of restlessness, loss of sexual desire or ability, weight gain, negative interactions with other medications.

Lithium and mood-stabilizing medications

- **Lithium**
- Valproic acid
- **Divalproex**
- Carbamazepine

Side effects include nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, trembling, increased thirst and need to urinate, weight gain, drowsiness, a metallic taste in the mouth, abnormalities of kidney function and abnormalities in thyroid function. These drugs may also increase the risk of diabetes, obesity and high blood pressure.

Benzodiazepines

- **Diazepam**
- Alprazolam
- **Lorazepam**

Prescribed to control physical symptoms such as shaking, palpitations and breathlessness. They try to make you less worried and more relaxed. Side effects include sleepiness, memory problems and dizziness.

Venlafaxime is another type of anti-depressant that can help anxiety if an SSRI does not improve your symptoms. Side effects include nausea, diarrhoea and sexual problems. You will have your blood pressure monitored with this drug.

Natural Treatments

There are a number of specific natural nutrients that have been discovered that may help with the issues raised above. Some of them play a relatively small role but an important one nonetheless, but need to be combined with other co-factors and nutrients to bring out their true potential.

The most potent 'stand alone' ingredient in SAMe which is even more natural than a herbal extract as it is present in every cell in our bodies...but often there is a deficiency which contributes greatly to feelings of depression.

The key nutrients are:

<p>5 -HTP (5-Hydroxytryptophan)</p>	<p>Produced from the African plant <i>Griffonia simplicifolia</i>. It significantly improves sleep disorders, anxiety and depression, comparable to conventional anti-depressants. 5-HTP receptors are found in high density in various brain regions and are responsible for many physiological and behavioural functions.</p>
<p>Phosphatidyl Choline</p>	<p>A major constituent of lecithin, essential in forming acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter in the central nervous system. It is beneficial in depression, bipolar disorder, anxiety and heart disease. Supplementation increases central neurologic activity, mood, brain energy and both short-term memory and vocabulary recollection.</p>

<p>SAMe (S-Adenosylmethionine)</p>	<p>Used to reduce the symptoms of depression and improve intellectual performance. It has affects on the brain similar to conventional anti-depressants...but being a natural nutrient in the body it does not have any negative side effects. It's prime function is to methylate serotonin and to ensure it remains 'active'</p>
<p>Huperzine A</p>	<p>An alkaloid moss originating from China, used for cognitive decline and Alzheimer's disease. Research suggests that Huperzine A's ability to preserve acetylcholine (loss of which is prevalent in several brain disorders) may be greater than that of some prescription drugs, protecting brain tissue and improving memory, cognitive and behavioural functions.</p>
<p>Vinpocetine</p>	<p>A natural constituent found in the leaves of Vinca minor (lesser periwinkle). It appears to have neuro-protective, antioxidant and other effects beneficial to brain function. Studies show possible improvement for people with memory disorders, dementia and stroke sufferers.</p>
<p>D-Phenylalanine</p>	<p>Increases attention and activity, relieves depression and increases stability against emotional stress, believed to be related to its metabolism to brain phenylethylamine.</p>
<p>L-Glutamine</p>	<p>An amino acid balancing the body during stress, depression, irritability and anxiety. Studies show a significant decrease in severely depressive patients by altering neurotransmission in mood disorders.</p>
<p>L-Histidine</p>	<p>An essential amino acid involved in many metabolic processes. Studies show a significant anti-depressant effect and a</p>

	reduction in the length of depression.
L-Tyrosine	An amino acid synthesized from phenylalanine. It is a precursor of thyroxine and melanin and used for the synthesis of norepinephrine, epinephrine and dopamine. Beneficial in preventing negative effects related to stress by increasing the availability of tyrosine to the brain. Used for stress, PMS and chronic fatigue syndrome.
Inositol	Effective in promoting the body's production of lecithin and required for the proper action of several brain neurotransmitters including serotonin. Beneficial in panic disorder, insomnia, depression and in treating lithium-induced side effects.
Omega 3 Fish Oil	Containing essential fatty acids, especially DHA (docosahexaenoic acid), known for multiple health benefits. Neuroscientists show evidence that Omega 3 DHA produces alterations in serotonin and dopamine levels and studies show an increase in rates of depression where depletion of omega-3 fatty acids occur in the Western food supply.

Plus....

Herbal Extracts

Many herbal extracts are also used to promote mental clarity and energy. These include:	
Gingko Biloba	Hops
Valerian	Siberian Ginseng

Chamomile	Vitamin B1 (Thiamine)
Passion Flower	Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine HCL)

The above ingredients all have their place in the prevention and treatment of depression, anxiety and stress disorders. However, individually these ingredients are simply not potent enough to provide you with the nutritional, chemical and hormonal balance you need. Combined however they can be very effective...and safe.

Recommended Products

Xtend-Life has developed a 'state of the art' natural supplement **Neuro-Natural Serenity** to help people with the above concerns. It contains all the nutrients as outlined in natural treatments. Because it contains SAME which is the most important nutrient it is [enteric coated](#). Without enteric coating the SAME will be destroyed by stomach acids and become inactive.

Omega 3 DHA/Fish Oil is also included in this recommended protocol as it will further enhance the effectiveness of the natural supplements.

Product	Quantity Per Day	You Need
Neuro-Natural Serenity	6 tablets per day	2 bottles per month
Omega 3/DHA Fish Oil Premium	3 soft gels per day	1 bottle per month

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Alternative Healing Academy

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With the increasing popularity of aromatherapy, reflexology, color & crystal therapy and a return to a more holistic lifestyle, people have begun searching for ways to earn more money; expand their skills; improve the health of themselves, friends & family; and increase their knowledge of alternative medicine.

The Alternative Healing Academy has developed several new courses in the holistic health care field for those who would like the opportunity to learn a healing modality at their own pace and in their own homes.

A Doctor of Reflexology with The Alternative Healing Academy is teaching classes with curriculum very similar to the Reflexology Practitioner Course and the Basic Aromatherapy at her local community college.

Our holistic health courses were developed by professionals in the Holistic Health Care field trained in the following modalities: Aromatherapy, Advanced/Master Aromatherapy, Reiki, Tuning Fork Therapy, Color and Crystal Therapy, Homeopathy, Herbalism, and Advanced Reflexology.

Furthermore, since we at the Alternative Healing Academy also realize that not everyone wants to make alternative medicine a career choice, we also offer [basic courses](#) as well as several [Mini Courses](#) which will teach you the skills you need to help improve the health and quality of life for yourself, your family and your friends.

[Check out our Affordable Payment Plans!](#)



All graduates of an Alternative Healing Academy home study course will receive a 20% discount off [AHHA Practitioner Membership](#) if they meet qualifying criteria and join within six months of their graduation date.

About Our Courses

Would you like to learn accurate, detailed aromatherapy, reflexology and/or color & crystal therapy information at your own pace in the comfort of your home? Would you like to become certified in Reflexology, Aromatherapy or Color and Crystal Therapy? An Alternative Healing Academy Distance Learning Course could be what you're looking for...

If you own or work for one of the following:

Natural Foods Store, Aromatherapy Store,
New Age Retail Store, Gift Shop, Herb Store,

Aromatherapy Manufacturer,
Massage Center, Holistic Center, Day Spa, or any type of Salon

If you are a practitioner:

Massage Therapist, Esthetician, Chiropractor, Nurse, Herbalist,
Acupuncturist, Bach Flower Therapist, Body Worker, Reiki,
Doula, Midwife, Energy Worker

If you are interested in personal development or improving the health of yourself and your family - these courses are also for you!

[Advanced Color/Crystal Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Basic Anatomy & Physiology](#) | [Basic Reflexology Practitioner](#)
[Basic Aromatherapy Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Reflexology Practitioner](#) | [Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner](#)
[Basic Color/Crystal Therapy Practitioner](#) | [Mini Courses](#) | [Advanced ReflexAromatherapy Practitioner](#)

Common Questions Asked About Holistic Health Distance Learning Courses:

What is Certification?



Most schools will offer an exam that tests the student's knowledge of the material taught in the respective course. Upon successful completion of this exam, a Certificate or Diploma will be issued by the school attesting that the student has successfully met the requirements as specified by that school. The only governmental recognition of Aromatherapy in North America is the occupational title designation granted to the BCAA under the Societies Act of British Columbia.

What is a Certified Aromatherapist or Reflexologist?

Most prospective students want to know whether taking our courses will lead to their becoming 'Certified' in that healing modality, thereby leading to the title of Certified Aromatherapist, Certified Reflexologist or Certified Color/Crystal Therapist. The answer to this really depends on what you mean by 'Certified.' We believe it can be misleading to purport that completing a course in a healing modality such as reflexology, aromatherapy or color/crystal therapy will lead to a designation of 'Certified' Therapist. These are not official

title designations nor are they ones which are recognized by any country's governmental body. All that these titles mean is that this is what an Individual Instructor, School or Institution decided to put on the Diploma it awards those who successfully complete their course.

What is an accredited course in Aromatherapy or Reflexology?

The answer to this will depend on who you are asking. At the present time, British Columbia is the only government to recognize Aromatherapy as a distinct profession and has granted Occupational Title Protection to the members of the BCAA (British Columbia Alliance of Aromatherapy) with the exclusive right for its members to call themselves Registered Aromatherapists (R.A.).

At this time, neither Reflexology nor Color/Crystal Therapy have such occupational designations in any country although one prominent Reflexology school in Colorado, The Modern Institute of Reflexology, has gained occupational designation for their institution in that state. MIR has been designated by the Colorado State Division of Private Occupational Schools - Dept. of Higher Education as an approved school. Our Reflexologist who developed the reflexology modules for our courses was trained at MIR as a Certified Reflexologist, a Master Reflexologist and a Dr. of Reflexology.

In the United States, the NAHA (National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy) has put into place their Approved Standards for Aromatherapy Training. The Alternative Healing Academy's Advanced Aromatherapy course meets and exceeds these standards and we are in the application process of becoming an approved program through the NAHA.

In Canada, there are a number of different Associations including the BCAPA (British Columbia Association of Practicing Aromatherapists) and the CFA (Canadian Federation of Aromatherapists). Time will tell if one authoritative body or association becomes the standard by which to judge and govern the educational offerings of these alternative healing modalities.

It has to be noted that NO form of aromatherapy "certification" is currently recognized in the USA by anyone other than those in the trade, nor is aromatherapy (or essential oils in the aromatherapy trade) regulated by any governmental body.

Some information about the courses we offer:

1) You can receive the course in one of two ways: A cd with the modules and tests in PDF format can be shipped to you; or, The modules can be emailed to you three at a time. Each time you complete the tests for the current three modules, a new set of three modules will be emailed to you.

2) All modules are clearly explained, are in pdf format and fully

illustrated.

3) The Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner and the Advanced Reflexology Practitioner courses are designed to meet the National Association for Holistic Aromatherapy (NAHA) guidelines.

4) A tutor will be available via email to answer any questions you may have.

You will be contacted after purchase to find out how you would like your course delivered. All tests for the course can be either emailed or snail-mailed to The Alternative Healing Academy.

Upon successful completion of any full diploma or certification course (with a score of 80% or higher), you will receive a beautiful Diploma, suitable for framing.



Course Testimonials

"I'm done! Going through the final and the case studies and having such amazing experiences and opportunities to help people, I truly feel blessed and honored to have had the intense education that came with this course. I discovered in me a new ability to serve others, not only through education but through the power of healing that comes with the use of essential oils. I am continuing to train personally with Alexandria Brighton and have begun work toward opening an aromatherapy practice. Thank you so much for your patience and knowledge. Most of all thank you for this new way of living and enjoying Life."

-A. Lindquist - Advanced Aromatherapy Practitioner

"I am finding the course great. It is written very well so even people like me can understand the human body a whole lot better. I just hope that I can remember it all. I don't think I have a chance of remembering the names of everything in the muscular system or the movement system. But, I do have more of an understanding of how everything works now. I find it just amazing. Thanks Heaps."

-M. Oliver - Basic Anatomy & Physiology

"This information is great that you are teaching. I would really like to talk my oldest daughter into taking your course. It really goes into detail which is very informative."

-Debbie F. - Basic Reflexology

"Seven years ago I started to see a reflexologist for migraines and sinus problems. I was amazed that I finally found relief without medication. I decided this year to search out a course in reflexology so I could help family and friends and show them the benefits of reflexology. I researched various courses on the internet and decided to go with the basic course through the Alternative Healing Academy. I was impressed with course material and the ease of receiving the course material."

"I was given an choice of having a CD sent to me or to receiving and sending back the assignments through email. I choose email. I received 3 lessons at a time that I could read and study on my own time frame and return the lessons when I was done. Everything was sent in a very timely manner and communication was open and quick. If I needed help, I knew it was only a click away and the response time was very quick. The techniques used also came in a video mode in the email that I could replay as much as I needed to."

"I felt I learned a lot and am able to help myself and others. Being able to log 20 hours of treatment time and writing the case histories for the final exam was extremely rewarding and helpful. I would recommend this course to others interested in reflexology because the course material was very informative and complete and written in easy to understand language."

-Jean Russell - Basic Reflexology Course

"I'm so excited about (the Advanced Aromatherapy course) and I'm particularly excited about the possibility of making custom blends for people! I hadn't anticipated having that opportunity when I took the course so I'm excited to have everything done! I'm very excited to have finished. I really enjoyed this course and really appreciate all the work you've put into it! This has been a fabulous jumping off point for me and I'm so glad I took it."

"p.s. I know the boys are much slower at the Reflexology, but my son is loving the classes."

-Megan P. - Advanced Aromatherapy Course

Our Associations

Organizational Member of the American Holistic Health Association - <http://www.ahha.org/>

Professional & Business Member of the National Association of Holistic Aromatherapy - <http://www.naha.org/>

Professional Member of the International Reflexology Association - <http://www.holisticbenefits.com/ima/international-reflexology-association.html>

Professional Member of the International Aromatherapy Association - <http://www.internationalaromatherapyassociation.com/>

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