

Discover 3 Successful Depression Treating Strategies

Don't ask your doctor as he may not know much about depression treating strategies. The majority of primary care providers will prescribe anti-depressant medications as the first and only option. While anti-depressant medications are a perfectly valid and sometimes helpful method of treating depression, I would not exactly call them successful as a study three years ago showed that only about 50% of patients could actually get rid of their symptoms with this type of medication. That is not a high success rate.

Before we list the three successful depression treating strategies, we need to understand the complexity of the problem. Most anti depressant medications work by increasing levels of serotonin which is an important brain chemical in determining our mood but it also plays a very important role in our appetite. But there are other causes and mechanisms at work which complicate the picture, such as a deficit in nutrition, a problem with our immune system, a high level of stress hormones. There can also be genetic and environmental factors at work too, not forgetting the psychological and social factors such as exercise, diet and social contacts. The first depression treating strategy is to look at the lifestyle of the depressed patient. There is now a ton of evidence to show that persons with a range of social contacts are less likely to fall into depression. Regular exercise has been shown over and over again to be beneficial because it produces endorphins which are also known as the 'happy chemicals'. One study even shows that a sweat breaking activity can be as effective as any anti-depressant if done regularly.

Talk yourself through depression. That is the second of the successful ways of treating depression that I can recommend. Talking could involve counselling and or psychotherapy. But, on a more modest scale, it could involve getting involved in a support group or joining the online forums where you can meet people and talk the whole experience through. It is also important in making social contacts, even if they are only online. The great advantage is that by talking about depression and learning coping skills, we are much less likely to have a relapse which is a big problem for many patients on depression medicines.

The third depression treating strategy is to look at alternatives to lift our mood. While relaxation, meditation, yoga and special breathing exercises will all help, we will need something else to boost our mood and to help us restore some of the balance in our brains which seems to be a bit skewed. One of the best treatments I know is a homeopathic or a herbal one. There are now studies to show that some herbs (St. John's Wort, passion flower and ginkgo biloba) have much fewer side effects and will be just as effective in restoring serenity to a troubled mind.