
Amino Acid Therapy for Stress, Anxiety & Depression

You're watching Food As Medicine T.V. where we help you heal from the root cause. Today is a very special segment. It was really one of my favorite aspects of private practice was working with people using amino acid therapy to help them overcome anxiety and depression, and in some cases, [00:00:30] helping them titrate off of antidepressant medication.

There is a caveat here. You must work with a clinician if you are going to be messing with amino acids or considering making a change to your medication. I really wanted to talk to you about this concept so that you are well educated going into working with whatever practitioner you're gonna work with. And I highly suggest, if you have anxiety and depression, which it affects all of us at some point in our life just because life [00:01:00] can be a lot sometimes. But if it's affecting you chronically to the point where you've lost interest in activities you used to love and it's dragging on, please get help. It's not as complicated as it may seem. It's not as hopeless as it may seem.

Only 36% of people who struggle with chronic anxiety and depression actually get help. So I hope if you are one of them that you feel inspiration and motivation from what we talk about here today.

[00:01:30] I wanna start off by explaining antidepressant medication, which is traditionally an SSRI, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor. And what these medications are designed to do is to recirculate our current transmitter pool. Serotonin is our feel good neurotransmitter. Just recirculate our current neurotransmitter pool so that we start to feel better. But here's the thing. If we have a poor diet or low hydrochloric [00:02:00] acid or not enough protein intake and we're not eating enough amino acids, you're only working with your current pool. You're not producing any more, so it's kind of like a sponge. Right? It's squeezing the sponge. Serotonin's coming out but when that sponge is dry, it's dry. And that's why maybe your medication isn't even working any more because the sponge is dry, and you need to use things like amino acids to replenish it, to replenish those beautiful neurotransmitters within your [00:02:30] body.

We go in-depth on the blog explaining pretty much each neurotransmitter, whether we're talking about GABA or dopamine, norepinephrine or if we're talking about 5-HTP or serotonin. I want you to understand that you have an excitatory system of neurotransmitters and an inhibitory system and how to create balance. If you're gonna work with a practitioner to create this balance, make sure they run something like the ZRT or the DUTCH test, which

measure your neurotransmitter levels [00:03:00] in dried urine. And that's the most advanced test as of now to help really target, which is why I want you to do this under the guidance of a practitioner.

So, on the blog we're gonna talk all about that so you can kind of troubleshoot what might be off, but let's just talk about what substances, what supplements we're often missing when we are amino acid deficient, when our neurotransmitters are depleted and we have anxiety and depression.

So, number one is L-Theanine. [00:03:30] This is an amino acid. It's hard to find. You can get it in dried mulberries at the health food store so throw this in your trail mix. And it's proliferate in high-quality green tea. We like Pique Tea Crystals for this reason because they're super concentrated. And so L-Theanine is gonna bind to glutamate, which is an excitatory neurotransmitter and bring it down. Bring down inflammation in the brain, and it's gonna help you handle stress. If you feel like, "Gosh, I don't have any resilience to stress lately," L-[00:04:00] Theanine is something that you need in your life.

Then magnesium is so important to nourish the nervous system. The nervous system works together with the neurotransmitters to create harmony within the body. We need to make sure we're having enough methylated B-12, but also inositol and choline are two B vitamins that target the brain that are responsible for replenishing our neurotransmitter production.

This is one that I can't live without during times of stress, but you can actually [00:04:30] take GABA, and GABA is an inhibitory neurotransmitter. If it's too low, we can get anxiety. We can have trouble sleeping and all kinds of issues. I think it's as effective as anti-anxiety medication when you're under stress. It is not safe for pregnancy or breastfeeding. That's the one caveat. The only thing really, amino acid that I can recommend for that would be L-Theanine.

Vitamin B-6 is so important. You cannot convert your tryptophan. [00:05:00] You can't convert 5-HTP to tryptophan without having enough vitamin B-6. Vitamin B-6 is really high in bananas. Have a lot of vitamin B-6 or some practitioners will put you directly on a 5-HTP or a tryptophan, depending on how you're processing your serotonin and how much currently exists within your body.

Chromium picolinate, when we think about neurotransmitter production being so tied into blood sugar regulation and the master [00:05:30] glands in the brain by regulating our blood

sugar using chromium, sensitizing ourselves to insulin, it will be much easier for the body to replenish neurotransmitters and that will be really helpful.

Taking a good multivitamin and then really important, the phospholipids are gonna be important, whether that's phosphatidylserine, phosphatidylcholine and fish oil. We need to really make sure we're having enough fish oil on [00:06:00] a daily basis. I think this is a supplement that every human should be taking, especially if you struggle with depression and anxiety. And iron. You can get anxiety and depression if your iron's low, so make sure you check not only iron but also ferritin, which is the first indication that your iron is going on the fritz.

And then including other foods, the lean meats, we get so many amino acids from lean meat, and it's hard to be completely vegan [00:06:30] and use your diet to replenish your neurotransmitters. And so this is why I would recommend grass-fed beef and pasture-raised chicken. You can get folate from your spinach, vitamin B-6 from garlic.

And then we know the gut-brain connection is very important because we produce more serotonin, the feel good neurotransmitter, in our guts than we do in our brains. We have to have a healthy gut, which is why I have some sauerkraut here because I want you to be able to eat your probiotics on a daily [00:07:00] basis because when we have some fermented food that helps us digest and use the minerals and vitamins and all the other foods that we're eating as long as we have a healthy gut. If we don't have a healthy gut, we've gotta go to gut rehab so you check out Gut Thrive In 5 and then you can come back and eat these fermented foods and they will be healthy for you once again.

So there you have it. A quick recap. Get yourself tested. Use the ZRT or the DUTCH test. See where your levels of excitatory [00:07:30] and inhibitory neurotransmitters are and then use both targeted amino acid supplements, vitamins, minerals and foods to bring balance to your system. And any really good functional medicine practitioner familiar with this way of practice will be able to help you slowly titrate off antidepressant medication if that is a goal for you, I am not suggesting it, however, I'm just suggesting you look into [00:08:00] it and you don't feel painted into a corner thinking, "I have to be on this for the rest of my life." Because I will tell you my friends the body wants to heal. It is this smart bio computer we've been born inside of, and when we give it what it needs, it will heal itself.

Thank you so much for watching, and I'll catch you next time on Food As Medicine T.V.