HORMONES OF HAPPINESS

All our feelings and emotions are a result of chemical reactions taking place inside our bodies. These reactions are responsible for making us feel negative emotions, like anger and sadness, as well as positive emotions, like love and happiness. Substances that take part in these reactions are called hormones. Hormones are organic chemical substances released by a cell, or organ or a gland or any body part of plants and animals that functions in the regulation of physiological activities and to maintain homeostasis. The chemical discharged from one part affects the cells in other part of the organism. Hormones are released in very minute quantities. Minute quantity of hormones carry out functions evoking responses from the target organs or tissues. The target organs or tissues are adapted to the minute quantities of the hormones. Hormones acts as chemical messengers that transport signal from one cell to the other. Among hormones there are so-called hormones of happiness. Hormones of happiness are produced in the body in times of ecstasy, them level rises during the euphoria and decreases during the depression. But along with the most important task is to give us a good mood, it performs in the body has a lot of functions. The most famous of them are Endorphins, Serotonin, Dopamine and Oxytocin.

Endorphins are neurotransmitters, chemicals that pass along signals from one neuron to the next. Neurotransmitters play a key role in the function of the central nervous system and can either prompt or suppress the further signaling of nearby neurons. Endorphins are our body's natural painkillers, since they block pain. Way back in the stone ages, endorphins were important to our ancestors because they enabled them to keep running through the pain and escape predators. Biological properties are very similar to the properties of opiates. Immediately mounted their strongest analgesic effect, several times higher than the effect of morphine in the same doses. That is why they are called "endorphins" (a combination of the words "endogenous" and "morphine").

Ways to increase endorphin levels:
- Exercise to cope with chronic pain.
- Listen music.
- Eat spicy food, since tongue has receptors that react to spice by sending messages to your brain that are similar to pain signals, causing your brain to trigger the release of endorphins.
Serotonin is the key hormone of happiness, since it regulates mood, prevents depression, helps to maintain a healthy appetite, regulates our sleep, thwarts irritation and makes you happy and sociable. Serotonin is also one of the important mediators of inflammation and allergies. It increases the permeability of vessels, the migration of leukocytes in the pocket of inflammation, frees up other mediators of inflammation and allergies. If serotonin is small, it requires increasingly greater amounts of insulin, so more sugar. On the other hand, you can use sweets or any foods with carbohydrates to improve mood. Did you know that 90% of all Serotonin is found in your GI tract? Often times, improving GI function can dramatically impact mood of patients.

Ways to increase your serotonin levels:
- Spend time in the sun, since sunlight causes your body to produce Vitamin D, which triggers the release of serotonin.
- Think happy thoughts, since your brain produces serotonin when you remember happy memories or think about things that make you happy.
- Consume foods like milk and corn, since they contain tryptophan, a substance that your body converts to serotonin. Other carbohydrates also contain tryptophan.
- Do a low-intensity workout, since your body produces serotonin when it is performing aerobic exercise, as opposed to the endorphins it produces during anaerobic exercise.
- Lose weight.

Dopamine is a pleasure hormone that is released when you strive towards a goal. Like serotonin, dopamine is a type of brain chemical called a neurotransmitter. It is involved in many pathways in the brain, playing an important role in a range of body systems as well as functions, including movement, sleep, learning, mood, memory, and attention. Dopamine motivates you to work hard so that you can achieve the satisfaction of reaching that goal. It also keeps you mentally alert and helps you focus.

Ways to increase your dopamine levels:
- Set daily or monthly goals, since they give you something to strive towards.
- Set exercise goals, since dopamine increases in tandem with serotonin and endorphins when you exercise. Setting goals will increase the production of dopamine even more.
- Eat foods that are rich in protein.

Oxytocin is classified as a neurotransmitter as well. It regulates social interaction and sexual reproduction, playing a role in behaviors from maternal-infant bonding and milk release. Often dubbed the "hormone of love", it has been used in many clinical trials which have shown its effects
on bonding, as well as how participants rated their overall satisfaction with life, much higher through use of oxytocin. Oxytocin has been used therapeutically to help couples in strained marriages facilitate a closer sense of love and connection. It has also been used in some families to help their autistic children develop more of a sense of personal connection to their family and surroundings. One of the major disruptors of normal Oxytocin release is any type of stress that our body experiences; emotional, work related, physical, etc... So, improving one's ability to manage stress in whatever way possible, can literally impact every area of their life, relationships and work. Remember to be kind to one another and spend lots of time with the people you love, you will improve your health by doing that one thing!

Ways to increase your oxytocin levels:
• Get a massage, since it relaxes your muscles and the prolonged physical contact triggers the release of oxytocin.
• Show your friends and family that you love them by touching them affectionately. You can hug your parents, throw an arm around a friend or cuddle up with your partner.

Hormones are effective, but they do have their limitations. The effects of endorphins are only temporary. If you have had a fight with someone for example, exercising will make you feel better for a while, but until you sort out the fight your unhappiness will keep returning. Oxytocin is a great way to build a relationship, but common sense dictates that you can't love and trust everyone you meet or you will be the victim of several scams. Too much dopamine is unhealthy, since it can cause addictions.

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