

THE HAPPINESS, "FEEL GOOD" COCKTAIL is comprised of the following chemicals:

Endorphins:	the body's natural opiate – suppresses pain
Dopamine:	the "high" experienced on achieving a goal – an extra boost of energy when the end is in sight.
Oxytocin:	the feeling of bonding and trust between family and loved ones. Also stimulated by massage.
Serotonin:	when we feel important – "top of our game". Being humiliated or belittled does the opposite (suppresses serotonin).

Endorphins are a group of peptides that are produced by your pituitary gland and central nervous system and that act on the opiate receptors in your brain. These neurotransmitters act like hormones to increase feelings of pleasure and well-being and to **reduce pain and discomfort**.

Endorphins are helpful and adaptive and nature's way of keeping us away from feelings of pain and moving us toward feelings of pleasure. Without endorphins, life would feel bleak and colourless, there would be no joy or excitement.

Below is a list of some of the many **benefits** of endorphins.

- Reduced depression
- Reduced anxiety
- Improved self-esteem
- Regulation or modulation of appetite
- An enhanced immune response
- Reduced pain

Insufficient endorphins result in:

- Increased depression
- Increased anxiety
- More mood swings
- Increased aches and pains
- Problems with addiction
- Insomnia – or disturbed sleeping patterns
- Impulsivity

Stress, inactivity and pain are the three major causes of suppressed endorphin production. By keeping a balance in our lives – and being aware of early warning signs – we can avoid the debilitating effects of melancholy and depression.