

## Integrative Approaches to the Management of Depression and Anxiety

Mi shebaeirach—A prayer for healing Debbie Friedman

Mi shebeirach avoteinu  
M'kor hab'racha l'imoteinu  
May the source of strength  
who blessed the ones before us  
help us find the courage  
to make our lives a blessing,  
and let us say, Amen.

Mi shebeirach imoteinu  
M'kor habrachah l'avoteinu  
Bless those in need of healing  
with r'fuah sh'leimah,  
The renewal of body,  
The renewal of spirit,  
and let us say, Amen.

### **Why do patients seek out integrative approaches**

Chronic & disabling symptoms, not responding to standard approaches (CBT/meds)  
Adverse effects of treatment—SE's due to meds

### **Background**

Depression and Anxiety are common, disabling, and often resistant to treatment  
Prevalence & severity of symptoms: ↑/time, ↑ in teens, & ↑ with Westernization  
This is consistent with ↑ prevalence of other chronic disease states

### **What are some of the targets for approaches**

Lifestyle factors/ Inflammation  
Genetics  
Dietary intolerance  
Nutritional deficiency  
Gut health  
Natural medicines  
Metabolic imbalances

### **Basic approach**

Discuss diet, exercise, stress management, sleep, substance concerns

### **Mindfulness-based approaches**

Pitt's Center for Mindfulness and Consciousness Studies <http://www.mindfulness.pitt.edu>  
Information on the MBSR class at UPMC Center for Integrative Medicine  
<https://www.upmc.com/services/integrative-medicine/classes/meditation>  
Newsletter <https://www.upmc.com/-/media/upmc/services/integrative-medicine/documents/upmc-cim-newsletter-fall-2018.pdf?la=en&hash=2B60E2ECC4585C3ADAB7AFD1D9B18890C586E53D>  
[mindfulness@upmc.edu](mailto:mindfulness@upmc.edu) or contact Carol Greco, PhD directly [greco@pitt.edu](mailto:greco@pitt.edu)

## **Diet**

Research mixed:

- demographic studies show connection—eg cultures with increased fish consumption;
- intervention studies go either way

Bottom line: encourage healthy, balanced, primarily plant-based diet, ↓ simple carbs, ↓ portion size, ↓ N-6/↑ N-3

## **Exercise**

For mood/energy/anxiety, general health—encourage 30+ mins/day of moderate intensity aerobic activity

For weight loss 300 mins/week (John Jakicic—Pitt)

<http://clinchem.aaccjnls.org/content/early/2017/11/17/clinchem.2017.272443>

## **Sleep**

Initial focus on sleep hygiene

Electronics—effect of the light & possibly EMF on melatonin

Mindfulness & other mind-body approaches

CBT-I

<https://www.upmc.com/-/media/upmc/services/integrative-medicine/documents/upmc-cim-newsletter-fall-2012.pdf?la=en&hash=2CF9EAB3A1019DBAE58456C19F434B8791B76A91>

## **Manage inflammation**

Key factor in many western diseases—heart disease, diabetes, cancer, arthritis

Depression also with strong association

Treatment is directed to lifestyle approaches

Catch 22—individuals with depression may have greater difficulty exerting energy/motivation

## **Genetics**

Can be helpful for: multiple failed med trials—lack of response &/or adverse effects

Genetic profile specific for mental health provides info on:

- genes affecting neurotransmitter activity &
- CYP activity—hepatic metabolism of drugs

## **Dietary intolerance**

Think of this especially if other symptoms occur with depression

IBS, fatigue, migraines, fatigue, fibromyalgia

Most common: dairy and gluten

## **Nutritional deficiencies**

B12/iron deficiency—vegans & those on acid blockers

Micronutrient deficiency—poor diet, impaired absorption ass'd with gut dysfxn

## **Gut health**

Think about concerns with:

IBS symptoms, history of antibiotic treatment, allergies/food intolerances

Issues:

- Impaired gut wall integrity—malabsorption/absorption of toxins
- Abnormal gut microbiome--limited diversity, presence of pathogens

## **Natural medicines**

Used in lieu of or as supplement to western meds

Fish oil

- mixed evidence for depression & bipolar d/o
- EPA is key—find preparation with higher proportion of EPA compared to DHA
- dose is 1-2 gm/day
- particularly with pregnancy, use high quality preparation to avoid toxins

SAM-e

- moderate evidence of benefit for depression
- requires high dose (800-1,600 mg/day)
- expensive \$1-5/day

Inositol

- benefit for anxiety & to a lesser extent depression
- available as capsule or powder
- main side effect is GI—cramping diarrhea (~10-20%)

## **Treatment of metabolic imbalances**

System developed by William Walsh, PhD (Walsh Research Institute)

Identifies 5 common imbalances

- Undermethylation
- Overmethylation
- Copper toxicity
- Zinc deficiency
- Pyroluria

Each associated with specific symptoms, impact on neurochemistry, and response to specific supplements

Research primarily case series <https://www.walshinstitute.org>

Resources/reading:

NIH/NCCIH—Herbs at a Glance <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/herbsataglance.htm>

Natural Medicines Database—available through HSLs

Integrative Medicine—David Rakel—available through HSLs

Nutrient Power—William J. Walsh—available through his website

Instinct to Heal—David Servan Schreiber—Pitt Bookstore or Amazon

Anticancer—David Servan Schreiber—Amazon

The C-Word (Movie)—Amazon/iTunes/Netflix or DVD from website