



Neurotransmitters and Your Health

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Neurotransmitters are chemical messengers that regulate physical and emotional processes. These vital chemicals facilitate communication between the brain and the body's glands, organs and muscles. They are released from neurons and travel across a small place called synapse, to reach receptors on target cells. Inadequate neurotransmitter function disrupts the signal to target tissue and has a profound influence on memory, movements and mood. This is a common cause of "senile moments" and increase when your body is under stress due to the numerous interactions of the stress hormone, cortisol, between many of the vital neurotransmitters.

SOME OF THE MAJOR NEUROTRANSMITTERS AND THEIR FUNCTIONS:

- Acetylcholine (memory & movement)
- Dopamine (motivation, sex drive & pleasure)
- Serotonin (mood & gut motility)
- Norepinephrine/Epinephrine (energy & anxiety)
- Glutamate (excitement & pain)
- GABA (sleep & pain modulation)

PROBLEMS CAUSED BY IMBALANCED NEUROTRANSMITTERS:

- Insomnia, Fatigue, Poor memory
- Depression, Anxiety, ADHD
- Irritability, Lack of Motivation
- Low libido, Feeling Stressed
- Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Pain
- Altered mental clarity and attention span
- Incoordination, Dizziness, Weakness
- Brain fog, Poor memory

For stress and weight management, I routinely order neurotransmitter analysis for my patients. While many places claim to optimize your brain, a true assessment of your brain function cannot be achieved without an in-depth analysis of your neurotransmitters to be interpreted by a well-trained, ideally board-certified, brain specialist. Balanced neurotransmitters are key to boosting willpower and reducing cravings so you keep your New Year's resolution! By correcting cortisol levels, balancing neurotransmitters and optimizing hormones, my patients were able to wean off antidepressants and sleep aids.

Speaking of sleep, the latest research has shown that sleep supports vital functions like detoxification (freeing our bodies of metabolic wastes and harmful substances), improves learning and helps our immune responses. The latest research showed that an average adult needs at least 7.5 hours of sleep; special channels open up in your brain only during sleep.

Due to the potential for dependency and adverse side effects of many sleeping pills and antidepressants, I look for the root causes of insomnia and mood issues instead of attempting a quick fix by prescription drugs. Inadequate progesterone, elevated cortisol in the evening and neurotransmitter imbalance are some of the treatable factors that an integrative, functional-based neurologist can correct to restore good sleep, elevate mood and achieve weight loss without resorting to potentially addictive drugs.

Dr. Eva Henry is board-certified in Neurology and Anti-Aging, Regenerative Medicine. Her passion is to utilize an integrative approach to prevent and treat neurological illnesses.

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