



## spotlight on health

### Stimulating The Brain's Feel Good Chemicals

(NAPS)—Here's encouraging news for people who are struggling with their weight or coping with mild depression.

Boosting a chemical naturally produced by the brain—serotonin—may offer relief from mild depression and for some people can make it easier to lose weight.

Scientists say that people with low levels of serotonin tend to be depressed, irritable, irrational, aggressive and inattentive. They often crave carbohydrates, especially candy, baked goods and other sources of simple sugars. As a result, these people with low serotonin levels are not only depressed, they tend to overeat and get fat.

Although in the human physiology, serotonin is produced from the amino acid tryptophan, many people cannot produce enough. Emotional and physical stress, as well as illness, all hamper the ability of the body to convert tryptophan to serotonin.

One way some people are overcoming mild depression and obesity is by using a nutritional formula containing 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP). 5-HTP is a compound derived from tryptophan that the brain can easily convert to serotonin.

When serotonin levels in the brain are elevated, a person may be less prone to overeating.

The use of 5-HTP to elevate serotonin levels can produce astounding results for both depression and weight loss, said Michael Murray, N.D., author of *5-HTP: The Natural Way to Overcome Depression, Obesity and Insomnia* (Bantam Books, 1998).

#### Signs and Symptoms of Medical Depression include:

- Poor self-esteem and lack of self-confidence
- Despair and hopelessness
- Loss of interest in ordinary activities and pleasures of daily living
- Withdrawal from social events and activities
- Fatigue and lethargy
- Dwelling on past events
- Chronic guilt
- Bouts of anger and irritability
- Loss of productivity
- Inability to concentrate or make decisions



**One of the criteria for mild depression is that a person is depressed most of the time for two years.**

In a clinical study conducted at the Osaka University Medical School, 107 patients received 5-HTP daily. Within four weeks, 74 of them reported significant improvements in mood.

As for weight loss, in one study, women receiving 5-HTP lost an average of 4.39 pounds in the first six weeks and 11.63 pounds after twelve weeks.

To find out more about 5-HTP and for a copy of the *Journal of Natural Health*, call 800 858-0228, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Pacific Standard Time or visit [www.whitewing.com](http://www.whitewing.com).