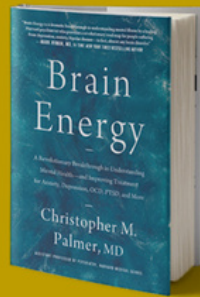


? Why are mental health
■ problems so hard to treat?

#BrainEnergy



BRAIN ENERGY:

A NEW SOURCE OF HOPE FOR TREATING MENTAL DISORDERS
AND A POWERFUL TOOL FOR VETERANS

Dr. Chris Palmer's Brain Energy theory argues that **mental disorders are metabolic disorders of the brain.**

This new understanding offers new treatments, ones that come with the hope of long-term healing as opposed to just symptom reduction.

What is metabolism and how does it affect the brain?

Metabolism is the process that all living organisms use to convert food into energy or building blocks used to maintain or grow cells. It is fundamental to life. When there are problems with metabolism, there will be problems in the way cells function. If your brain cells aren't functioning properly, this can result in symptoms of mental illness, such as anxiety, unrelenting depression, or post-traumatic symptoms.

How do I assess my metabolic and mental health?

You can take a free self-assessment at www.brainenergy.com. This tool will help you identify areas of concern that will be important to discuss with your healthcare provider.

What are metabolic health strategies that can improve mental health?

The first step in improving your mental health is getting a full health assessment from your doctor to rule out illness, hormonal imbalances, and nutrient deficiencies that may be contributing to poor mental and metabolic health. Examples include low thyroid hormone or nutrient deficiencies, such as iron, vitamin B12, and vitamin D. Once that's complete, you can start implementing the 6 elements to the right.

Diet



Good nutrition is a foundation of metabolic health. This means avoiding ultra-processed foods and instead eating real, whole foods that are nutrient-dense, such as meat, eggs, fish, and non-starchy vegetables.

Your clinician might recommend a specific diet for your mental health condition, such as the **ketogenic diet**. This is a therapeutic diet composed of high fat, moderate protein, and low carbohydrates. It has been used for decades to treat epilepsy and in recent years is being used to treat mental illnesses, including bipolar disorder and schizophrenia.

Sleep



Sleep is a time of recovery. It plays a crucial role in our overall health and well-being. Most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep each night for optimal wellness. Sleep affects our metabolism and sleep deprivation can lead to an array of issues that affect mental and physical health.

Exercise



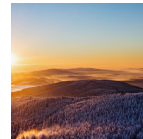
Ever heard of a runner's high? Our brains evolved to reward prolonged physical activity. Exercise causes the release of molecules that promote neurogenesis and brain growth. Cardiovascular exercise and strength training are crucial for improving metabolic and mental health. Maintaining a regular exercise routine is also known to improve memory and prevent age-related cognitive decline.

Avoiding alcohol and drugs



If you are using drugs or alcohol, you may need to address this if you want to improve your mental health. Using alcohol and drugs, both immediately and over time, impairs your metabolism. It's important to have a discussion with your healthcare provider about your use of alcohol and recreational drugs.

Light



Sunlight and light exposure during the day are essential for our health and well-being. They help regulate our circadian rhythms, impact our sleep, and natural sunlight stimulates your skin to produce vitamin D.

Sense of purpose and social connections



Humans are driven to have a sense of purpose. Doing what you love and finding meaning can relieve stress and bring you joy. Spending time with loved ones and friends and having strong social connections reduces levels of depression and anxiety.

If you are struggling with your mental health, these things can be more difficult to do. Some people feel alone and purposeless. It will be important to discuss these issues with your healthcare provider, as they will play a role in your treatment.