

How to Increase Dopamine Naturally

1. Eat Tyrosine Foods

Eating tyrosine foods is especially important for people with dopamine deficiency.

Tyrosine is an amino acid that serves as a precursor for dopamine, norepinephrine and epinephrine. Studies [conclude](#) that tyrosine influences dopamine levels, so consuming more of the amino acid can help reverse a deficiency.

The best tyrosine foods (or dopamine foods), that are easy to incorporate into your diet include:

- grass-fed meats, pasture-raised poultry and wild-caught fish
- pastured eggs
- organic dairy products
- nuts and seeds
- beans and legumes
- whole grains (like quinoa and oats)
- some protein powders

In order to boost dopamine levels by eating tyrosine, you need to consume a well-balanced diet that's rich in micronutrients. Tyrosine needs adequate amounts of vitamin B6, folate and copper to be converted into neurotransmitters.

L-tyrosine is also available in supplement form, which may be helpful if you can't get enough of the amino acid in your diet.

It's also important to avoid dopamine-depleting foods, like excessive amounts of saturated fats and refined (and artificial) sugars, which can cause a short-term spike in the hormone but lead to deficiency over time.

2. Get Enough Sleep

Getting enough sleep helps the brain regulate production of this hormone. Our circadian timing system is the body's internal clock or biological pacemaker.

In the morning, dopamine levels rise naturally, allowing us to wake up and start the day. In the evening, levels fall so we can turn the brain down and settle in for the night.

Sticking to a consistent bedtime every night and wake time every morning promotes the proper production of this neurotransmitter.

Studies find that when dopamine receptors decrease in the brain due to sleep deprivation, this [is associated](#) with reduced alertness and increased sleepiness.

3. Exercise

There are three major neurotransmitters that are modulated by exercise: noradrenaline, serotonin and dopamine. It's the connection between physical activity and these neurotransmitters that allow exercise to positively affect brain function.

Animal studies have shown that treadmill exercise **counteracts** motor dysfunction by increasing dopamine production in the brain. In addition to this, wheel running has been shown to have a protective effect against neurotoxicity and on dopaminergic neurons.

4. Practice Mindfulness and Kindness

Studies have found that when we practise mindfulness meditation and yoga, it helps **increase** dopamine levels and reduce feelings of anxiety.

Incorporating a yoga practice or any type of meditation, be it seated, walking or laying, can help regulate the production of neurotransmitters that play a role in brain health.

Dopamine levels also increase when we're rewarded or after pleasurable experiences, so it makes sense that practising simple acts of kindness can help boost levels of this feel-good hormone.

5. Use Supplements

There isn't exactly a dopamine supplement, but there are supplements that may help to boost levels naturally. Here are some of the best supplements for increasing levels of this hormone:

- **Vitamin D:** A 2016 study **displays** how vitamin D treatment modulates dopamine circuits in the brain. Using a vitamin D supplement for this reason has been shown to support treatments for drug addiction and dopamine-dependent behaviours.
- **Probiotics:** Researchers have **learned** that bacteria can synthesise and respond to hormones and neurotransmitters. This means that adding

more good bacteria to your gut, and reducing bad bacteria, can have positive effects on dopamine levels.

- **Curcumin:** A study published in *Psychopharmacology* found that curcumin [was able to](#) increase serotonin and dopamine levels in mice.
- **Mucuna pruriens:** Mucuna pruriens is a tropical plant that contains high levels of L-dopa, which is the precursor to dopamine. For this reason, mucuna pruriens supplements are used in [Ayurvedic medicine](#) for improving Parkinson's disease.

In addition to these natural ways to boost dopamine levels, there's a pharmaceutical drug called Levodopa that's used to increase levels and treat Parkinson's disease.

There are also dopamine agonists, which make up a class of drugs that bind to and activate the dopamine receptors in the brain. These drugs make the body think it's getting enough of the hormone, and they're used to treat a range of health conditions, including depression, insomnia and fibromyalgia.