

Can you eat your way to a happier life?



Food for the soul: Add walnuts, sunflower oil and fresh spinach to a tuna salad for a quick, omega-3 rich lunch, says Prof Basant Puri, right.



THERE is a natural way to beat depression – that's the message from a world-leading researcher and author.

Prof Basant Puri, who lives in Cambridgeshire and previously worked at Addenbrooke's and Fulbourn hospitals, has pioneered the use of natural fatty acids to successfully treat depression.

He has also written *The Natural Way to Beat Depression*, revealing why EPA – an omega-3 fatty acid contained in oily fish – is so effective at treating depression without the side-effects produced by conventional medicine.

Prof Puri, a consultant in psychiatry and imaging at Hammersmith Hospital and Imperial College London, has been using long-chain omega-3 and omega-6 natural fatty acids to treat moderate, major and manic-depression and other brain disorders such as schizophrenia, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder, chronic fatigue syndrome and Huntington's chorea for the past six years.

He says EPA is a highly successful, side-effect free antidepressant which is also capable of improving overall brain function.

Prof Puri, who trained at Cambridge University, says: "By taking a combination of ultra-pure EPA and virgin evening primrose oil, the body obtains the right fatty acids to rejuvenate the structure and

functioning of the brain.

"The antidepressant action of this combination is just as good as, if not better, than that of conventional medicines, but without the adverse side-effects.

"In addition, there are excellent benefits for the heart and circulation. The sleep experienced is of the highest quality and very refreshing. People find they have more energy. The skin is also nourished naturally and rejuvenated, and actually looks and feels younger within six weeks."

He says factors such as caffeine, nicotine, stress hormones, high levels of trans-fatty acids that are common in processed foods and some vitamin and mineral deficiencies all conspired to make it hard for our bodies to produce EPA and other omega-3 fatty acids.

A high-EPA nutritional supplement can be taken. Prof Puri says the best one is VegEPA, produced by Cambridge company Igennus (available at JT Gregory Pharmacy in High Street, Trumpington or from 0845 1300 424).

More than 2.9 million people in the UK are diagnosed as having depression at any one time. The charity Depression Alliance established National Depression Week, which runs from Monday to Sunday, April 23 to raise awareness of the illness. See www.depressionalliance.org for more information.



Try this at home

Cooking Suggestions from *The Natural Way to Beat Depression*
Eating oily fish is one of the best ways of obtaining EPA through diet.

Why not:

- Stir-fry strips of oily fish with fresh chopped vegetables in sesame, rapeseed or olive oil. Then drizzle uncooked oil over the finished dish.
- Grill salmon steaks and make a mayonnaise with olive oil. Serve with broccoli and wholegrain brown rice.
- Mash cooked, flaked mackerel with soft cheese, chopped chives and a teaspoon each of olive oil and sunflower oil. Add a squeeze of lemon, black pepper and a few drops Tabasco. Spread on wholemeal toast.
- Mash tinned sardines with two teaspoons of olive oil, chopped fresh parsley and the juice of half a lemon. Make a sandwich with sliced tomato and wholemeal bread or toast.
- Add chopped walnuts, fresh sunflower oil, chopped avocado and fresh spinach leaves to a tin of a tuna for a quick lunch.