Soup: The Healthy Depression Comfort Food

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Soups for Depression

Comfort soups sure do make us feel better, and if you have depression, they are certainly a much better choice than potato chips, candies, cookies, chocolate, and other high caloric foods. They are nourishing and have a rich supply of carotenoids, antioxidants, free radical quenchers, and thousands more active ingredients that can directly impact your health.

Chicken soup is considered a comfort food to many people. What do you think about when you think of chicken soup? Do you recall your mom or grandmother making chicken soup when you were sick as a child? Or did she also make it at other pleasant times in your life? Was it comforting to receive a cup of chicken soup when you were sick?

Often, people associate comfort foods with relationships, according to researchers at The University of Buffalo and State University of New York. They have a neurological connection to their mom or family member who comforted them during a time of need.

And you can't go wrong with a bowl of chicken noodle or chicken vegetable soup; just about every research study on it proves that it is a good thing in one way or another. Some studies show that soup increases vitamin C levels and this is good when you have depression because a vitamin C deficiency causes depression. Gazpacho soup is the type of soup tested by Tufts University for the vitamin C.

Then there's the free radical quenching properties by tomatoes and tomato soup. Tomatoes contain lycopene, which neutralizes free radicals. Interestingly, when 17 healthy adults consumed tomato soup, juice or other tomato products that provided 30 mg lycopene daily for four weeks, their lycopene levels increased from 181 to 684 nmol/L. At the same time, their ability to neutralize fat and protein oxidation increased significantly, too. The scientists decided that a tomato-rich diet could reduce stress effectively.

Here are a few soups for depression to help get you started.

Chicken Soup with Vegetables

Ingredients:

- 3 chicken breasts, raw, deboned
- 3 white onions, sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 tomatoes, sliced into bite-sized chunks
- 1?2 head cauliflower, broken into bite-sized chunks
- 1?2 bunch parsley, sliced
- 2 cups brown rice

- 3 quarts water
- Salt and pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Sear chicken breast meat in pan. Set aside.
2. In saute pan, saute onions in olive oil. Add to large soup pot along with meat.
3. Add tomatoes, cauliflower, parsley and brown rice.
4. Finally add water and salt and pepper to taste.
5. Simmer on low heat, covered for 45 minutes.

Next page: a recipe for homemade tomato soup.

Homemade Tomato Soup

Ingredients:

- 5 pounds Roma tomatoes, cored and sliced
- 3 ribs celery, sliced
- 1 white onion, sliced
- 1 bunch green onions, sliced
- 1?4 cup olive oil
- 1?4 teaspoon basil
- 1?4 teaspoon oregano
- 1 cup milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 2 quarts water

Directions:

1. Wash, core and slice all the tomatoes.
2. Saute the celery and onions in a medium sized saute pan with olive oil until onions are translucent.
3. In a large soup pot, add the tomatoes, sauteed veggies, and herbs.
4. Add the water. Salt and pepper to taste.
5. Cook on low heat, covered for 1 hour. During the last 10 minutes of cooking, add the milk.

Part of beating depression is not feeling so alone. When you make a pot of soup, share it with someone else. There's nothing like sharing a bowl of soup with a neighbor or friend. Bon appetit!