

# Serotonin and Its Uses

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## Serotonin and Its Uses

Serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine, 5-HT) is a neurotransmitter in the brain that has an enormous influence over many brain functions. It is synthesized, from the amino acid L-tryptophan, in brain neurons and stored in vesicles. Serotonin is found in three main areas of the body: the intestinal wall; large constricted blood [vessels](#); and the central nervous system. The most widely studied effects have been those on the central nervous system. The functions of serotonin are numerous and appear to involve control of [appetite](#), sleep, memory and learning, temperature regulation, mood, behavior (including sexual and hallucinogenic behavior), cardiovascular function, muscle contraction, endocrine regulation, and depression (1).

The activity of serotonin arises in the brainstem from clusters of neurons known as the raphe nucleus. From the brain, serotonin neurons extend to virtually all parts of the central nervous system making the branching of the serotonin network the most expansive neurochemical system in the brain. The importance of this network becomes apparent when considering each serotonin neuron exerts an influence over as many as 500,000 target neurons. Due to the widespread distribution of serotonin in the nervous system, it is

not surprising that this neurotransmitter can be linked to many types of behavior (2).

Of the chemical neurotransmitter substances, serotonin is perhaps the most implicated in the treatment of various disorders, including anxiety, depression, obsessive-compulsive disorder, schizophrenia, stroke, obesity, pain, hypertension, [vascular](#) disorders, migraine, and nausea. A major factor in the understanding of the role of 5-HT in these disorders is the recent rapid advance made i...

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... needs to be discussed further. More studies should be conducted to show how daily exercise, along with a good diet, can help raise serotonin levels. Such research may lead to patients learning how to treat themselves without relying on any type of prescription drugs. This may also lead to a decrease in the experience of serotonin syndrome.

#### WWW Sources

1) Serotonin: The Neurotransmitter for the 90's

<http://fairlite.com/ocd/articles/ser90.shtml>

2) Widespread Uses of Serotonin

<http://fairlite.com/ocd/articles/ser90.shtml>

3) The Serotonin Syndrome

<http://members.aol.com/atracypd/syndrome.htm>

4) 5-Hydroxytryptophan

<http://www.vitaminusa.com/pharmacy/5hyd10cap30v.html>

5) 5-HTP, Prozac Alternative

<http://www.webfactor.com/dhea/5htp.html>

6) Getting High on Serotonin - Neurotransmitters and Health

<http://www.lamancha.com.au/%20Serotonin.html>

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