

Beta endorphins & wellness

Editorial

Beta Endorphins, the endogenous opiates, have been the subject of many recent publications. Beta Endorphin levels have positive effects, particularly on mood and behavior. Endorphins increased after aerobic exercise, massage, and sex. Beta endorphin is composed of the 31 amino acids and influences the sensation of pain and well being. It has been shown also to Control the craving for chocolate and potentially addictive substances. Endorphins also Control feelings of stress and frustration. It Regulate the production of growth and sex hormones and Reduce symptoms associated with eating disorders.

The human body produces at least 20 different endorphins with possible benefits and uses that researchers are investigating. Beta endorphin appears to be the endorphin that seems to have the strongest affect on the brain and body during exercise; it is one kind of peptide hormone that is formed mainly by Tyrosine, an amino acid. The molecular structure is very similar to morphine but with different chemical properties. While many people are vaguely aware that the blissful feelings one experiences after sex may be endorphin related, few are aware that endorphins are naturally produced by a wide range of activities like meditation, deep breathing, ribald laughter, eating spicy food, or receiving acupuncture treatments or chiropractic adjustments. Fewer still know that endorphins are actually good for health, and can play a role in helping drug and alcohol abusers overcome their addiction. Let's explore some of the dynamics of endorphins and how they affect our daily lives.

Although more research needs to be done, endorphins are believed to produce four key effects on the body mind: they enhance the immune system, they relieve pain, they reduce stress and postpone the aging process. Scientists also have found that beta-endorphins can activate

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George Grant

World organization of Natural Medicine, Canada

Correspondence: George Grant, World organization of Natural Medicine, Richmond Hill, Ontario, Canada, Tel 416 562 3140, Email drgrant@rogers.com

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human NK (Natural Killer) cells and boost the immune system against diseases and kill cancer cells. In contrast to short-intensity workouts like sprinting or weightlifting, prolonged, continuous exercise like running, long-distance swimming, aerobics, cycling or cross-country skiing appears to contribute to an increased production and release of endorphins. This results in a sense of euphoria that has been popularly labeled the "runner's high."

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Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.