

## Top 10 Blood Tests for Depression

In our practice, we run comprehensive labs on our clients for a full functional evaluation of depression and other mood disorders. They help us identify a potential root cause for our patients' mood symptoms and help guide our personalized nutrition and supplement recommendations. They are not uncommon and can easily be ordered by your primary care provider!



At Nourish Health & Wellness, we use tighter reference ranges for these labs. Remember that a “normal” lab value may not be ideal for you given your unique symptoms, genetics, and personal history.

1. Vitamin D - Not only does this impact immunity & bone health, it supports serotonin, your feel good neurotransmitter! A low vitamin D level has been linked to depression.
2. MTHFR Genotypes - These genes help code for an enzyme that is crucial for metabolizing folic acid & folate into its active form, L-methylfolate, through a process called methylation. L-methylfolate is pure brain food & crucial for your mood. People who are positive for the MTHFR genotypes may be more prone to anxiety and depression.
3. Vitamin B12 and Folate - Low levels of both of these critical B vitamins are strongly linked to depression and neurological symptoms.
4. Homocysteine - Homocysteine is an amino acid that plays an important role in our body's methylation pathway. When homocysteine levels are high this indicates that an individual has an increased need for B-vitamins and that their methylation pathway may be impaired.
5. GGT (Gamma-glutamyl transferase) - This enzyme helps determine the presence of liver injury & identify if you are having issues with detoxification, which is a common cause of fatigue, sluggishness & other symptoms of depression.



6. Fasting insulin - A high fasting insulin level indicates that a person is having significant blood glucose fluctuations over time (even if their blood sugar value is normal!) which can contribute to anxiety and mood swings.
7. High sensitivity C-Reactive Protein (hsCRP) - A marker of overall inflammation, an elevated CRP is an indication that there is inflammation present somewhere in the body. Research shows that inflammation is a cause of depression.
8. Cholesterol panel - Did you know that low total cholesterol is associated with depression? You need cholesterol to make your sex hormones (DHEA, testosterone, etc), to keep your brain healthy, and make neurotransmitters like serotonin.
9. Ferritin - Diets low in iron can impact the production of the neurotransmitter dopamine- which we need for motivation, movement and experiencing pleasure.

To learn more about our Personalized Lifestyle & Nutrition Program and schedule a new patient consultation with us, go to [www.nourishhealthandwellness.com](http://www.nourishhealthandwellness.com) or text 804-513-9507.

