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St. John's Wort and Depression: In Depth

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What's the Bottom Line?

How much do we know about St. John's wort for depression?

- We know a fair amount about the short-term effects of St. John's wort on depression but less about its long-term effects.

What do we know about the effectiveness of St. John's wort for depression?

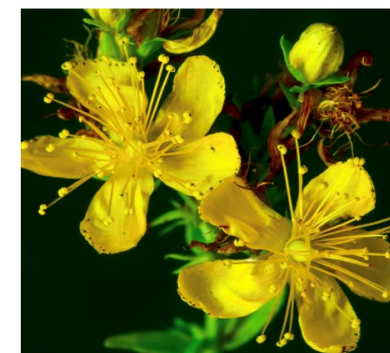
- St. John's wort isn't consistently effective for depression. Do not use it to replace conventional care or to postpone seeing your health care provider.

What do we know about the safety of St. John's wort for depression?

- St. John's wort limits the effectiveness of many prescription medicines.
- Combining St. John's wort and certain antidepressants can lead to a potentially life-threatening increase in your body's levels of serotonin, a chemical produced by nerve cells.
- **Don't try to treat depression on your own.** Depression can become severe if you don't get effective, professional help. For some people, depression can increase the risk of suicide. Talk to your health care provider if you or someone you know may be depressed.

About St. John's Wort

- St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*), a plant that grows in the wild, has been used for centuries for mental health conditions. It's widely prescribed for depression in Europe.
- St. John's wort is sold as a [dietary supplement](#) in the United States, where the



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For Consumers

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