



## Eliminate Alcohol Dependency

by G. Bossik on September 15th, 2011 at 7:00 am



The family and friends of singer Amy Winehouse are grieving. According to the Daily Mail, her parents are devastated by her death.<sup>1</sup> The British newspaper reported that she had been undergoing treatment for a drinking problem.

Winehouse may have been sober when she died, though. In the UK, The Sun reported that she may have died from a type of [alcohol withdrawal](#) called *delirium tremens* (DTs).<sup>2</sup> The DTs can cause mental confusion, hallucinations, and seizures.

A recent study found a 6.6% death rate in patients with alcohol withdrawal syndrome.<sup>3</sup> The authors studied 436 patients. 71.1% of them had delirium tremens. 29 of the 436 patients died.

The key to avoiding that outcome is to change your behavior *before* you become an alcoholic. And the key to making that change is to understand how alcohol dependency can start.

One study found that alcoholics drink to improve their mood.<sup>4</sup> The authors say, "This hypothesis embodies a view of [alcoholism](#) in which psychiatric symptoms are primary, with drinking occurring in response to those symptoms."

The good news is that there may be natural ways to reduce alcohol dependence. One study found that rats that preferred alcohol would consume less of it when given an extract of the herb, St. John's Wort.<sup>5</sup>

The authors of the study say that this herb may be useful as an antidepressant. They also note that St. John's Wort helps keep neurotransmitters such as dopamine, noradrenaline, GABA, and serotonin in the brain longer.

"[Depression](#) and alcoholism have some neurochemical similarities, such as low brain serotonin activities," the authors say.

One study found several possible techniques to raise your brain serotonin levels and improve your mood.<sup>6</sup> These techniques include:

- Exposing yourself to bright sunlight
- Exercising
- Increasing your intake of foods containing the amino acid tryptophan.

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### Sources:

1. Sara Nathan et al, "[Winehouse Family Confirms Amy's Funeral Will Take Place Today as Tributes Continue to Pour In](#)," Mail Online
2. Lia Nicholls and Lucy Connolly, "[Amy Winehouse Family Fear She Was Killed by Giving Up Alcohol](#)," The Sun
3. Monte R. et al, "[Analysis of the Factors Determining Survival of Alcoholic Withdrawal Syndrome Patients in a General Hospital](#)," PubMed.gov
4. Vania Modesto-Lowe and Henry R. Kranzler, "[Diagnosis and Treatment of Alcohol-Dependent Patients With Comorbid Psychiatric Disorders](#)," NIAAA
5. Amir H. Rezvani et al, "[Attenuation of Alcohol Intake by Extract of \*Hypericum Perforatum\* \(St. John's Wort\) in Two Different Strains of Alcohol-Preferring Rats](#)," Alcohol and Alcoholism
6. Simon N. Young, "[How to Increase Serotonin in the Human Brain Without Drugs](#)," Journal of Psychiatry and Neuroscience

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