

## What are “happy hormones”?

Hormones are chemical messengers that tell different parts of our body to do different things, at different times. For example, hormones tell our body to wake up, and make us feel sleepy, hungry, full, happy and sad.

The body has many hormones that make us feel happy!

**Serotonin** that makes us feel happiness (which by the way is mainly produced by the gut!)

**Dopamine** creates feelings of pleasure and plays a motivational role in our brain’s reward system. About 50% of dopamine is made by our good gut bacteria – there it is again!

**Oxytocin** is the ‘love hormone’, and **endorphins** (‘feel-good hormones’) are released after exercise. You might have heard of a “runner’s high”? That’s the endorphins at work!

The good news is, our ‘happy hormones’ reflect our environment, diet, exercise regimen and good gut bacteria, so the choices we make every day have the power to influence our moods!

Here are the main happiness chemicals in your body and what mood function they influence!

### Chemical

Serotonin  
Dopamine

Oxytocin  
Endorphins

### Mood function

mood stabiliser, wellbeing, happiness  
pleasure, motivational role in brain’s  
reward system

Bonding, love, trust  
Pain relief, runner’s high, relaxation

