



**ARIES**  
**(MAR. 21-APRIL 20)**

Expect to be helped when you ask for it. Try to make extra cash. Avoid serious discussions with loved ones. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**TAURUS**  
**(APR. 21-MAY 21)**

Spend time with loved ones. Try not to divulge any personal information. Make amends if you can. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.



**GEMINI**  
**(MAY 22-JUNE 21)**

Keep your cravings in check. Don't make promises you can't keep. Lovers may not be truthful. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



**CANCER**  
**(JUNE 22-JULY 22)**

Your determination will result in flawless work. Love is on the horizon. Try not to be too extravagant this week. Your lucky day this week will be Saturday.




**LEO**  
**(JULY 23-AUG 22)**

Plan a nice evening for two. Family get-togethers will be interesting. Get involved in activities to make new friends. Your lucky day this week will be Sunday.



**VIRGO**  
**(AUG. 23-SEPT. 23)**

Plan your outings carefully. Keep a check on your financial situation. Don't let others hinder your progress. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



**LIBRA**  
**(SEPT. 24-OCT. 23)**

Problems with your boss could lead to unemployment. Take care of health. Don't say something you'll live to regret. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



**SCORPIO**  
**(OCT. 24-NOV. 21)**

Take part in group activities. Try to give a helping hand. Trips will be favourable for business and pleasure. Your lucky day this week will be Friday.




**SAGITTARIUS**  
**(NOV. 22-DEC. 21)**

Travel should be on your list. Get involved in physical activities. You can make changes that will enhance your appearance. Your lucky day this week will be Thursday.



**CAPRICORN**  
**(DEC. 22-JAN. 20)**

There will be disruption in your home. Discuss office matters behind closed doors. Focus on forming business partnerships. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



**AQUARIUS**  
**(JAN. 21-FEB. 19)**

Your ideas will help you and your partner get ahead. Don't allow personal problems to conflict with professional duties. Your lucky day this week will be Tuesday.



**PISCES**  
**(FEB. 20-MARCH. 20)**

You can attract attention in social events. Try not to take on other people's problems. You could have financial issues. Your lucky day this week will be Monday.

HEALTH

The dopamine delusion

Lights out. Wrapped in a fuzzy blanket, he lay down cosily, finally convincing his mind to make way for some sleep. Bleep! Bleep! It called out. With its sonorous cry, the dark ceiling suddenly lit up as white lights pranced across it. With an inexplicable emergency, he picked up the magical device and popped open his 'Notifications' tab to check the new 'Likes' he had received on his latest status update. Two more hours went by just like that, scrolling, 'Like'-ing and laughing at 'doggo' memes until finally when he noticed the first sunlight outside his window, he decided he ought to go to bed to wake up to reality the next day.

So why exactly do we feel the urge to stay glued to social media? Or check out a new eatery and try out their delicious meals? Or grab a smoke between work every now and then?

These are just a handful of the gazillion other things that please us or give us a rewarding feeling and all of it comes down to one substance – dopamine! Known as a neurotransmitter, dopamine has two pivotal functions: aiding muscle movement and mediating senses of pleasure and reward to the brain. It is widely known to play an integral role in motivational processes as well and is the main reason why we feel happy doing particular things.

According to Tamima Tanjin, a distinguished Clinical Psychologist and Senior Consultant at Prottoy Clinic and Psychologist at Rokeya Hall, University of Dhaka, indulging in the simplest 'happy' activities like getting a present, eating your favourite dessert or meeting a loved one can cause dopamine levels to rise, making us feel elated. However, due to wanting more and more of that feeling of exhilaration, quite often, we tend to lose ourselves in the inescapable web of various kinds of addictions.

Drugs for starters are the key stimulants of extremely high amounts of dopamine in the body. At first, tiny doses of any drug instantly give the user a certain 'high'. But after some time, even a very large dosage of the drug is no longer sufficient to satiate the user's lust for a 'kick' as the body learns to develop tolerance and its requirements escalate. “By that time, it's already too late as they become addicted to the drug and continue to abuse it just to repel withdrawals,” explained Tanjin. In addition to this, smoking, drinking, gambling, etc. are a number of other ruinous habits that are directly linked to the formulation of dopamine.

Hiding slyly among a myriad of visible addictions, social media addiction is inconspicuous yet gravely impactful. Moreover, most addicts belonging to this category of addiction often fail to recognise their obsession while they feed away on likes, comments and shares. Tanjin discussed that social media interactions are largely based on receiving compliments and attention, which regularly

allow us to feel cheerful and optimistic. Scrolling down the home page and checking message inboxes on numerous messaging applications become a vital source of happiness as the user's mind plunges into the stream of mystical dopamine.

It's obvious that high levels of dopamine make us ecstatic and surround us with the most colourful and positive of emotions. However, before long, the dreamy bubble bursts and we are left to deal with the galling consequences.

“Too much dopamine may lead a person to react abnormally and become uncontrollably hyper,” Tanjin revealed. On one hand, one is likely to experience perks, for instance, a boosted motivation, cognitive acuity and productivity.

On the other hand, some may experience certain adverse effects like anxiety, agitation, stress and delusions. Tanjin further stated that unusually high levels of dopamine are also associated with several disorders.

“Dopamine levels are usually found to be quite high in schizophrenics, for instance,” she added. The very first step to levelling dopamine in the body starts with completely detaching the patient from the addictive material, followed by treating him/her with appropriate medication to wear down dopamine levels.

Just as large quantities of dopamine can be harmful for the person, very low amounts are not a good sign either. A person may feel fatigue, lack of motivation as well as mood swings due to a deficiency of dopamine.

“Low dopamine levels are common among patients suffering from conditions such as depression and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD),” Tanjin admitted. To raise the amounts, certain enhancement medicines may be prescribed to the patient, given the approval of concerned doctors.

Without doubt, we can agree that at the end of the day, balance is key — in everything in life and in maintaining a sound mind and body. Finding happiness in the little things in life is invaluable as well as crucial to exude a balanced level of the indispensable dopamine.

**By Nafisa Faruque**  
**Photo: Collected**

