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A Hall Ambulance Periodical Dedicated to Your Wellness, Well-Being, and the HAS Employee Experience

Want a Better Mood? How What You Eat Affects Mental Health



Simple Nutrition Steps to Support Your Mental Well-being

Have you ever noticed how your mood changes after enjoying a wholesome meal compared to indulging in a sugary snack? The relationship between what we eat and how we feel runs deeper than many of us realize. Take a moment to consider how nutrition not only shapes our physical health but also influences our mental wellbeing. When we pay attention to the foods we choose each day, we empower ourselves to support both mind and body. By understanding the impact of nutrition on mood, anyone can take meaningful steps toward feeling better, thinking more clearly, and living a more balanced life. Let's explore how what's on your plate can make a difference to your mental health, and practical ways to nourish your mood through the power of food.

The Science Behind Food & Mood

Research continues to reveal the strong link between nutrition and mental health. Our brains need a steady supply of nutrients to function well. When we eat a balanced diet rich in vitamins, minerals, and healthy fats, we support not just our physical wellbeing but also our emotional resilience.

Conversely, poor eating habits can contribute to increased stress, anxiety, and even depression. In short, good nutrition is foundational for a positive mood and a clear mind.

Nutrients that Support Mental Wellness

Certain nutrients play a starring role in supporting our mental health. Here are a few to keep on your radar:

- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids:** Found in fatty fish like salmon, walnuts, and flaxseeds, omega-3s help build brain cells and regulate neurotransmitters. Studies show they can reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety.
- **B Vitamins:** Whole grains, leafy greens, eggs, and legumes are packed with B vitamins. These nutrients are essential for energy production and help manage stress and mood swings.
- **Vitamin D:** Our bodies make vitamin D from sunlight, but it's also found in fortified foods and fatty fish. Low levels of vitamin D are linked to increased risk of depression.
- **Magnesium:** Nuts, seeds, and

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Mental Break Game Time

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 Q M A D G V O Q M I G
 O M F P Y K L M C G V
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 K Y K A Z E J U L I I
 G I W D L O Z V E G E
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Word Search

Find the hidden words in the grid, which can run horizontally, vertically, or diagonally, and can be spelled forward or backward.

- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| CELEBRATE | INTENTION |
| COZY | MOTIVATION |
| FALL | RESOLUTION |
| FROSTBITE | SLIP |
| ICE | SNOWFLAKE |

Want a Better Mood? How What You Eat Affects Mental Health

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dark chocolate are good sources. Magnesium helps regulate the nervous system and can ease feelings of anxiety.

- Antioxidants: Colorful fruits and vegetables are rich in antioxidants like vitamin C and E, which protect brain cells from stress and inflammation.

Exploring the Connection of GLP-1s and Mental Health

Recently, there has been growing interest in GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) receptor agonists, a class of medications primarily used to manage type 2 diabetes and support healthy weight loss. GLP-1s work by mimicking a natural hormone that regulates appetite, blood sugar levels, and digestion. But emerging research suggests their benefits may extend beyond metabolic health, and into the realm of mental wellbeing.

GLP-1s may positively impact mental health in several ways. By helping to stabilize blood sugar levels, these medications can reduce the risk of mood swings and energy crashes that often accompany poor dietary choices. Some studies indicate GLP-1s may support cognitive function and reduce inflammation, which is linked to depression and anxiety. Additionally, improved weight management can boost self-esteem and overall mood. While some early studies are exploring potential links between GLP-1s and mood or cognitive function, research in this area is still developing, and results are not yet conclusive. Because everyone's health needs are unique, it's important to discuss any questions or considerations about GLP-1 medications with your healthcare professional.

The Impact of Poor Diet on Mental Health

On the flip side, a diet high in processed foods, added sugars, and unhealthy fats can wreak havoc on your mood. These foods can trigger inflammation, disrupt blood sugar levels, and lead to energy crashes—all of which affect how you feel. Over time, poor nutrition increases the risk of mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression, and brain fog, which is why making mindful food choices is so important.

National Healthy Weight Awareness Month

National Healthy Weight Awareness Month, recognized each January, serves as an important reminder of the integral role healthy weight management plays in our overall wellbeing. This observance is designed to educate and empower us to make informed decisions about nutrition, physical activity, and lifestyle habits that

contribute to lasting health. By highlighting both the physical and mental aspects of healthy weight, the initiative encourages evidence-based strategies for preventing chronic diseases, improving mood, and promoting resilience. Whether you're motivated by clinical recommendations or personal goals, this month offers a timely opportunity to evaluate your habits, access credible resources, and take meaningful steps toward a balanced and sustainable approach to health. And, just in time for those New Year's resolutions! If you need a place to start, check out the resources available through your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with Uprise Health.

Practical Tips for Eating Your Way to a Better Mood

You don't need to overhaul your entire diet overnight. Small, consistent changes can make a difference. Here are some actionable steps to boost your mental health through nutrition:

1. Start with a Balanced Breakfast: Fuel your day with whole grains, protein, and healthy fats to stabilize your mood and energy.
2. Eat the Rainbow: Include a variety of fruits and vegetables in every meal to get a broad spectrum of nutrients and antioxidants.
3. Limit Added Sugars and Processed Foods: Swap sugary snacks for nuts, seeds, or fruit to avoid mood swings and crashes.
4. Stay Hydrated: Dehydration can affect concentration and mood. Aim for at least eight glasses of water daily.
5. Practice Mindful Eating: Slow down, savor your food, and pay attention to how different foods make you feel.

Making mindful nutrition choices can play a significant role in supporting your mental health, mood, and energy. By incorporating balanced meals, focusing on whole foods, and staying hydrated, you can positively influence how you feel every day. Remember, even small, consistent changes—like starting your day with a healthy breakfast or reaching for fruits and veggies—can add up to meaningful improvements over time. Take the opportunity to notice how different foods affect your wellbeing and consider sharing your experiences with others. Your journey to better mental health starts one meal at a time!

<https://uprisehealth.com/resources/want-a-better-mood-how-what-you-eat-affects-mental-health/>

JANUARY AWARENESS

Blood Donor Month (RED)
Firefighter Cancer Awareness Month (FLAME PRINT)
National Self-Care Month
3: International Mind/Body Wellness Day
9: National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day (THIN BLUE LINE)

JANUARY COMMUNITY EVENTS

3: Dia de los Reyes Magos Half-Marathon/5K @ Yokuts Park
10: Bak. Fog Run @ 6299 Lake Ming Road
12: Cults & Classics: "American Graffiti" @ Fox Theatre
17: Rio Bravo Rumble 5K/10K @ 15701 Hwy 178
26: Cults & Classics: "Terminator 2: Judgement Day" @ Fox Theatre

JANUARY FARMER'S MARKETS

4, 11, 18, 25 (Sun): Haggin Oaks Hen's Roost Farmer's Market @ 8800 Ming Ave
3, 10, 17, 24, 31 (Sat): From the Farmhouse Farmer's Market @ 3201 'F' St.; Downtown Hen's Roost Farmer's Market @ 1916 'G' St.; Riverlakes Farmer's Market @ 8601 Hageman Road

The HR Spot

Take a Mental Health Minute- Remember, it's okay to pause and recharge. Use Your Resources- Don't forget about our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for confidential support and wellness tools whenever you need them.



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