

# FOOD MOOD

for your



What you eat affects the structure & function of your brain and has a direct impact on emotional wellbeing. Here's a taste of what you should know....

## 1. WHOLE TRUTH

Your body relies on macronutrients, vitamins, and minerals to make the many neurotransmitters & hormones that balance mood. Whole food sources are key!

## 2. CUT THE CRAP

Sorry to be blunt, but processed food has no place here. Stripped of vital nutrients and often packed with sugar and unhealthy oils, it's a recipe for inflammation that can exacerbate depressive symptoms.

## 4. CARB ASSIST

While you're focusing on protein, don't forgo the carbs. Protein's amino acid tryptophan needs carbohydrates to get it into the brain where it does its work to produce serotonin. Pairing protein with a complex carb from whole grains, fruits, and veggies does the trick.

## 3. PROTEIN POWER

Amino acids in protein are essential to the production of the neurotransmitters serotonin and dopamine, AKA the "feel-good" chemicals. A diet rich in protein from poultry, fish, nuts, and dairy can boost mood by boosting serotonin and dopamine.

## 5. FRIENDLY FATS

Studies show omega 3 fatty acids reduce inflammation and enhance brain function. Sources include oily fish like salmon, sardines, and mackerel; flaxseeds and pumpkin seeds; seaweed and algae.





## 6. ROCK STEADY

Studies show a link between mood and blood sugar balance - meaning the more uneven your blood sugar, the more uneven your mood. Skipping meals can promote anxiety and digestive disturbances, too. Eat at regular intervals, and stick to whole food sources.

## 8. "B" HAPPY

B vitamins are needed for energy production and maintaining the nervous system, including the brain. They've also been shown to reduce the risk of mood disorders. Turn to dark leafy greens, eggs, meat, poultry, nuts, beans, and whole grains.

## 10. STAND-OUT NUTRIENTS

Magnesium and zinc deficiencies are fairly common, and both can contribute to anxiety and/or depression. Incorporating these nutrients is easy with whole grains, nuts, beans, animal protein, and tofu.

## 7. ANTIOXIDANT PUNCH

Vitamins A, C, and E contain powerful antioxidants that reduce oxidative stress and may help relieve depression & anxiety. Add color to your diet with berries, veggies, and other plant foods.

## 9. NATURE'S MOOD BOOSTER

Vitamin D deficiency can contribute to a low mood, but the best source is right outside your door. The body gets about 90% of its stores from the sun. Aim for 10-15 minutes of sunlight on exposed skin per day.

## 11. ICING ON THE CAKE

And by *icing*, I mean exercise. Exerting *yourself* can exert a positive effect on *your mood*. Even a low-impact walk is effective. (And, yes, an occasional dessert is ok.)

