

FOOD *AND* THOUGHT

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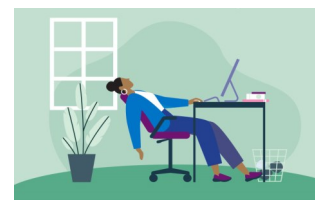
A lifestyle approach to improving mood and wellbeing

"LET THY FOOD BE THY MEDICINE AND THY MEDICINE BE THY FOOD."

HIPPOCRATES

Feeling tired? Low energy? Unmotivated? It could be your diet!

There are a lot of things that can cause fatigue; a poor night's sleep or not enough sleep, stress, even some health conditions. But what we eat also plays an important role in our energy level - in both positive and negative ways. Because the body is fueled by the foods that we eat it is important to feed it the best foods possible, and to avoid those that leave us feeling sluggish, tired and unable to concentrate. Focus on whole foods and avoid processed foods whenever possible. Below is a list of some of the best—and worst—foods for optimum cognitive health.



Foods to Avoid

- Artificially sweetened foods and beverages
- White bread
- Baked goods
- High caffeine drinks
- Processed and/or cured meats (such as sausage, bacon and salami)

Foods to Eat More Of

- Avocado
- Kidney beans
- Almonds
- Banana
- Spinach
- Dates
- Brown rice

What are Processed Foods and How Do They Effect Emotional Health?

Most food needs some degree of processing, and not all processed foods are bad for the body. However, chemically processed foods, also called ultra-processed foods, tend to be high in sugar, artificial ingredients, re-fined carbohydrates, and trans fats. Because of this, they are a major contributor to obesity and illness around the world, and are increasingly being linked to impaired brain health, including mood disorders and cognitive decline.

In recent decades, ultra-processed food intake has increased dramatically worldwide. These foods now account for 25-60% of a person's daily caloric intake throughout much of the world.

These ultra-processed foods are sometimes called "cosmetic" foods, as compared with whole foods. Some examples of ultra-processed foods include: frozen or ready meals, baked goods—including pizza, cakes, and pastries, packaged breads, processed cheese products, breakfast cereals, crackers and chips, candy and ice cream, instant noodles and soups, reconstituted meats, such as sausages, nuggets, fish fingers, processed ham, sodas and other sweetened drinks.



Rule of Thumb —Read your labels. The fewer ingredients the better! If there is an ingredient listed that your grandmother would not recognize, AVOID THAT FOOD!

Change can be difficult. Start by adding a few healthier food choices to your daily and weekly meal plans. Then slowly add more as you begin to remove some of the less healthy choices. And be patient with yourself. Change takes time. But your body—and your brain—will thank you for it!

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