

# THE FOOD & MOOD CONNECTION

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## NUTRITION AND MENTAL HEALTH CONNECTION

- Our food impacts our mood. Nutrient deficient processed foods do little to maintain positive physical, psychological, and emotional overall health and well-being; often times exacerbating symptoms.
- There is science behind this referred to as the “gut-brain” connection. There is a nerve called the vagus nerve that connects our guts to our brains. Research has revealed that up to 90% of the vagus nerve’s fibers carry information from the gut to the brain, rather than the other way around and that over 90% of serotonin is located in the digestive tract.
- Our western food systems lack nutrients, favors profit over health, and lower socioeconomic populations are disproportionately affected by this.

**The following are some general guidelines for a happy belly and happy mood!**

### GOOD MOOD FOODS:



#### Protein

fish, poultry, eggs, beef, lamb, pork, venison, buffalo, dairy protein, veggie protein



#### Fats

omega-3 fats, fish, whole fat yogurt, coconut milk, avocado, butter (*NOT margarine*)



#### Vegetables

ALL, fresh, plentiful, raw and cooked, dark leafy greens for sure

### GOOD MOOD FOOD GUIDELINES:

- Eat enough and regularly, 3 meals a day with no more than 5 hours between; **don't skip meals, and definitely don't skip breakfast.** Ideally a 12 hour fast between dinner and breakfast. (*This is NOT a weight thing, but how the body best optimizes nutrients*)
- Eating according to genetic heritage, seasonally and locally, as much as possible

### BAD MOOD FOODS:



#### Sweets and white flour starches

A lot of things out of boxes and the freezer and cans (*not as much*). Read your labels!



#### Wheat

and sometimes rye, oats and barley – *dependent on the sourcing and processing of these products and your own personal tolerance to them*



#### Bad mood fat

vegetable oils, shortenings, margarine, trans-saturated, etc.



#### Additives

caffeine, aspartame, colorings, preservatives, chemical additives, pesticides



#### Allergens

wheat, cow's milk products, soy and nightshade family (tomatoes, peppers, white potatoes, eggplant and tobacco, chocolate, corn, peanuts, eggs, oranges, apples, dairy (modern cow))

### BAD MOOD FOOD HABITS:

- Not eating enough or skipping meals
- Low calorie dieting; low fat diets; low protein diets; Prepackaged diet foods (no nutrients) ~notice the word “diet”!

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