The Mental Health Benefits of Eating Right

We all know that if we eat healthy foods, our bodies will feel better. However, did you know that eating right can have a positive effect on your brain, as well? Yes, the foods you eat can impact your moods, stress levels, energy, and even cognitive functioning! In today’s post, we will be discussing the benefits of eating a healthier diet and will provide some tips for potentially eating your way to a healthier brain.

# **The Mental Health Benefits of Eating a Healthy Diet**

Eating a healthy diet has a multitude of benefits to offer those looking to reap mental health benefits. These benefits include:

## **Decreased Stress Levels**

Stress can have a devastating and long-lasting impact on the health of your brain. However, [studies](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7781050/#:~:text=Dietary%20fiber%20decreases%20inflammation%20throughout,depression%2C%20anxiety%2C%20and%20stress.) have found that a healthy diet, particularly one with a healthy amount of dietary fiber, can lead to lower stress levels, benefiting your brain in the short-run and long-run.

## **Improved Cognitive Functioning**

[Studies](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6550267/) have found that caloric intake and the quality of one’s diet can have significant impacts on their cognitive functioning and development. This relationship is believed to be due to the fact that a healthier diet can allow for healthier brain development, decreasing inflammation and allowing the brain to prosper.

## **Mood Boosting**

I am sure that you have all heard of the term “hangry”. When we don’t get enough nutritious foods in our day, we will normally find ourselves experiencing lower moods, a lack of energy, and irritability.

## **Decreased Risk of Certain Mental Health Conditions**

There have been a number of studies that have found that individuals who eat healthier diets may find themselves at a lower risk of mental health conditions like depression. One [example](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23720230/) of these studies includes a review that found that those who followed a diet known as the Mediterranean diet appeared to be at a 32% lowered risk of depression when compared to those who did not eat a healthy diet.

# **Foods That May Encourage a Healthy Brain**

So, what is considered a “healthy” diet? “Healthy” can look different for different people, so developing the best diet for you may take the help of a health care professional. However, there are a few healthy food habits anyone can pick up to encourage a happier, healthier brain. These include:

* Eating enough food throughout the day
* Eating more fruits- particularly berries
* Eating more vegetables- particularly leafy greens
* Including omega-3 rich sources, such as fatty fish, avocados, seeds, and nuts
* Cutting back on your sugar intake
* Eating your eggs

# **We Are Here for You**

If you have found that your mental health is struggling due to your relationship with food, our compassionate and caring mental health therapists are here for you. [Contact](https://michiganpsychologicalcare.com/contact.php) us today, and we will connect you with a counselor who will help you develop a deeper understanding of your inner struggles and work with you to find a treatment option that will leave you living a higher quality of life.

**References**

<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23720230/>

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