

# Food and Mood

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While it's widely known that nutrition plays a key role in a person's physical health, it directly affects mental well-being, too.

It's not just *what* we eat that can  
affect our mood –  
*how* we eat matters too.

# Carbohydrates

Your body needs at least 130 grams of carbohydrate per day to produce enough glucose for the brain to function.

Focus on minimally processed sources of complex carbohydrates.

Minimize simple, sugary carbohydrates, which can negatively impact mood.

Whole grain bread, cereal, pasta

Brown rice and quinoa

Potatoes, corn, green peas

Legumes

Oats

Popcorn

Fruit

Milk, yogurt

# Protein

Protein is linked to higher levels of dopamine and norepinephrine - brain chemicals that play a role in your mood, motivation and concentration.

Poultry

Lean beef and pork

Seafood

Eggs

Legumes

Nut butter

Milk, yogurt, cheese

Tofu, tempeh, seitan

# Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Research suggests omega-3 fatty acids may help to reduce low mood states.

Best sources: Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, sardines, herring, and mackerel

Next best: Flaxseeds, chia seeds, walnuts, soy foods, canola oil, and fortified foods

# Vitamins & Minerals

Folate

Iron

Omega-3  
fatty acids

Deficiencies can affect energy, mood, and brain function.

Magnesium

Potassium

Selenium

Focus on vegetables, fruits, whole grains, legumes, lean meats, fatty fish, eggs, dairy, nuts, and seeds.

Thiamine

Vitamin A

Vitamin B6

Vitamin B12

Vitamin C

Zinc

# The Gut-Brain Connection

The bacteria in our intestines may affect neurotransmitters such as dopamine, norepinephrine, acetylcholine, and GABA, which are critical for mood, anxiety, concentration, reward, and motivation.

Eat a variety of plant-based foods.

Eat probiotic foods such as yogurt, kefir, miso, tempeh, kimchi, kombucha, and sauerkraut.

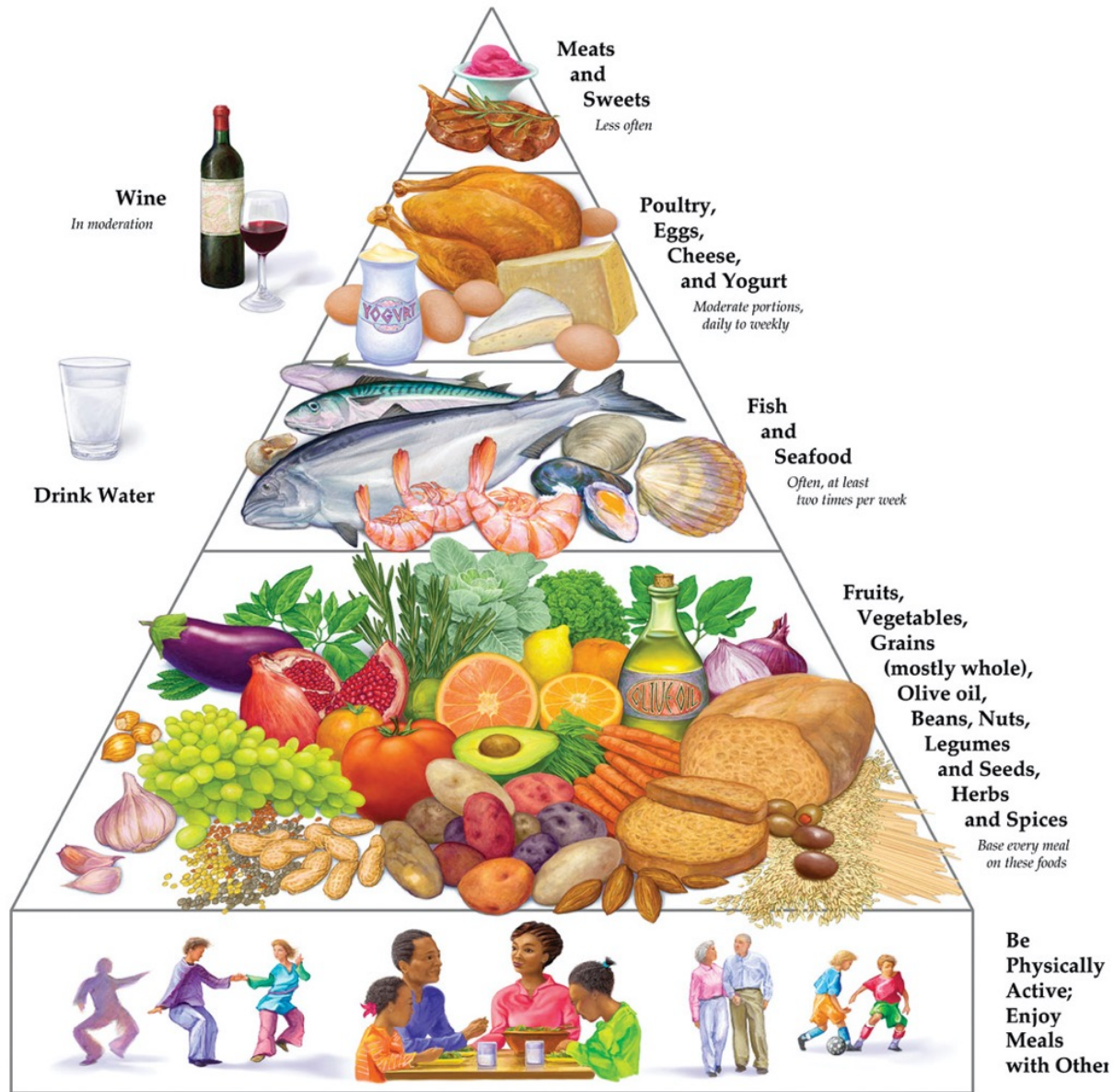
Minimize added sugar, artificial sweeteners, ultra-processed foods, and alcohol.



# The Bottom Line

To optimize mood with food,  
eat a variety of nutrient-dense,  
minimally processed foods.

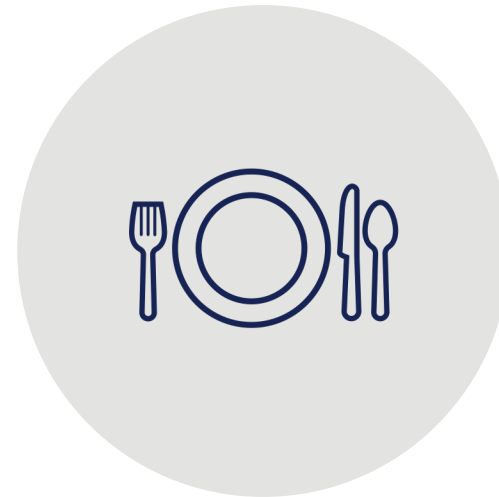
# Mediterranean Diet Pyramid



# *How We Eat Matters Too*

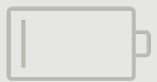


NOT EATING REGULARLY



BEING ON A "DIET"

# Eat Regularly



Carbohydrate stores deplete every 3 to 6 hours.



This can cause irritability, difficulty concentrating, and physical discomfort.



Complex carbohydrates and protein are recommended throughout the day.

# Ditch the Diets



Deprivation can cause a range of negative emotions.



The deprivation-binge-guilt cycle wreaks havoc on mental well-being.



Honoring your body's needs and wants nurtures inner peace.

Questions?