



# Nutrition & Psychological Wellbeing



## The Connection



We are all familiar with the information connecting diet and our physical health. A newer area of interest is the link between nutrition and psychological health.

Having the chocolate bar & coffee mid afternoon often leaves you feeling energised for a short time, and happier and motivated! But how long does that mood last - and what are the emotions that are experienced?

When we haven't eaten well, our mental activity shifts to a state where we may feel irritable, aggressive, angry, unable to concentrate, weak, physically shaky.

## Big Benefits of Good Nutrition



Handle the stress of life better

Gain energy

Better and more stable mood (including reduced bad moods)

Better sleep

Be sharper mentally - e.g. better concentration

(and more cognitive advantages)

**Our diet has the potential to affect our mental health and wellbeing at every stage of life. What we eat and drink on a daily basis affects how we think, feel and behave - regardless of our gender, age or family background.**

## How is our Food and Brain Health Linked?



The brain needs core ingredients from our food to work well - Complex Carbohydrates, Essential Fatty Acids (EFA), Amino Acids, Vitamins and Minerals, and Water.



For example - The brain & central nervous system is made up of 60% fat (Omega-3) found in oily fish, salmon, etc. Some people suffering from depression can be lower in Omega-3.



Iron is needed for the transfer of oxygen around the body. Iron deficiency and anaemia are linked to problems like lethargy and low mood.



## Diet Tips for Better Sleep

Avoid large, late evening meals

No caffeine after dinner

Avoid alcohol

Eat something containing tryptophan (an amino acid), such as yoghurt, banana, poultry, eggs, peanuts, or tuna

Have a glass of warm milk before bed

Have a small evening snack of complex carbohydrates



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