

# MINDFUL HEALTH ~ I WILL FOCUS ON ME

## Eating Well: Nourish the Mind

Food we use to fuel our bodies also helps to nourish the mind.

Proper nutrition and good food choices are essential for your overall health and state of wellbeing. When your body gets the right mix of nutrients, it can function better in every capacity. Eating healthy will increase mental and physical performance, improve energy levels and help prevent short-term illnesses and chronic conditions, such as digestive problems, heart disease, diabetes and specific cancers.

The food you eat has the potential to affect your mental health and wellbeing at every stage of life. Good nutrition is integral for a healthy mind and can improve mood, alertness, concentration, performance, memory and cognition. Healthy eating is also linked to improved brain function and can reduce feelings of stress, anxiety, depression and other mental health issues.

### Nutrition tips for good mental health and overall wellness

- Include a combination of these foods in your diet:
  - Vegetables and fruit
  - Whole grain foods
  - Nuts and seeds
  - Beans, peas and lentils
  - Fish and shellfish
  - Lean meats and poultry
- Eat a variety of healthy foods each day and follow [Canada's Food Guide](#)
- Limit your intake of foods high in saturated fat, sugar and salt
- Enjoy fish at least twice a week. Choose fish high in omega-3 fats like salmon, trout, mackerel, herring and sardines
- Start the day with breakfast; it replenishes essential nutrients and provides energy. Eat small meals and snacks every three to four hours, throughout the day
- Cut down on the caffeine – especially at night. It can disrupt sleep and make you feel irritable. Caffeine is found in coffee, tea, energy drinks, chocolate and some soft drinks
- Drink water. Your brain depends on proper hydration to function at its best
- Focus on food, not supplements. Remember, supplements are not an alternative to a healthy, varied diet. Speak to a health professional if you think you need a supplement
- Eat meals with others. Enjoying healthy foods with family, friends, neighbours or co-workers is a great way to connect and enjoy quality time together
- Pay attention to what, why and how much you eat. Deal with food cravings and stress by being active, spending time with family and friends and reaching for healthy snacks

### PUBLIC HEALTH

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