

Healthy Nutrition in the Workplace



Capital Area Safety Council 2/21/24

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“Those who think they have no time for healthy eating will sooner or later have to find time or illness.”

-Edward Stanley

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Outline

- Nutrition and Work Connections
- Healthy Eating Overview
- General Workplace Eating Tips
- Eating in the Office
- Eating in the Field
- Vending Machines, Fast Food and Eating Out

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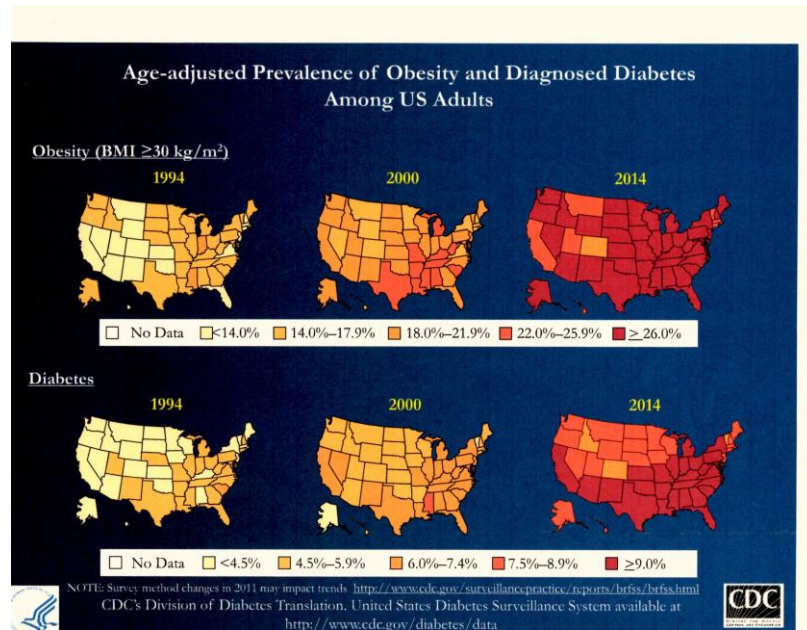
Relationship between Diet and Work

- Move to **sedentary jobs** has decreased average energy expenditure by 100 calories/day
 - 100 calories extra per day =
 - 10 pounds weight gain per year
 - 100 pound weight gain over 10 years!
 - 2000 steps = 100 calories burned
- Top 10 professions with the most employees who are obese:
 - truck drivers (38.6%)
 - transportation and material moving (37.9%)
 - protective services such as police, firefighters and emergency responders (33.3%)
 - cleaning and building services (29.5%)
 - mechanics and repairers (28.9%)
 - health services excluding doctors and nurses (28.8%)
 - administrative support, including clerical (27.9%)
 - personal services (27.2%)
 - technicians and related support (26.6%), and precision production and plant operators (26.1%)



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Relationship between Diet and Work

- Obese workers have higher rates of injury
- **Unhealthy meals at work** = decreased productivity
 - Post High Carb Meals = energy crash, low motivation, poor attention
 - Post High Fat Meals = brain fog, groggy
- **Dehydration at work** = poor productivity, reduced cognitive abilities, slower reaction times and even morale
- **Healthy eating at work** = happier, more engaged and creative workers
 - BMJ study, up to 7 servings of fruits & vegetables created more dopamine production, increases curiosity, motivation, mood, engagement, mood

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What is Healthy Eating?



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**“Eat food, not too much,
mostly plants.”**

-Michael Pollan

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Portion Sizes - Then vs. Now



Cheeseburgers

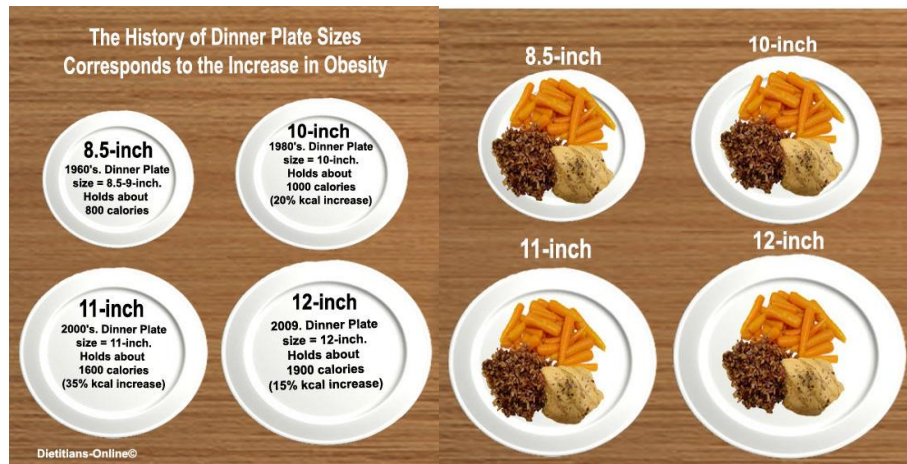


Bagel



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Pay Attention to Your Plates!



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Nutrient Dense

Plant based Minimally Processed Whole Foods



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Choose a Plant-Based Diet

- Diet comprised of MOSTLY plant foods
- Plant “based” ≠ vegan
 - 2/3 or more foods from plants
 - 1/3 or less from animals
- Plant foods include:
 - Fruits
 - Vegetables
 - Nuts & Seeds
 - Whole Grains
 - Beans & Legumes
 - Coffee, Tea, Dark Chocolate!



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Why a plant-based diet?

□ Studies have shown it can decrease risk of many chronic diseases:

- Cancer – Occurrence AND Recurrence
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- High Blood Pressure
- Cholesterol
- Stroke
- **Obesity**



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Why a plant-based diet?

□ Plant foods in general tend to be:

- Lower in calories - **Prevents Obesity**
 - Fruits & vegetables about 1/3 calories of protein & starches
- Improves Health - Nutrient dense
 - Vitamins
 - Minerals
 - Fiber
 - **Phytochemicals**

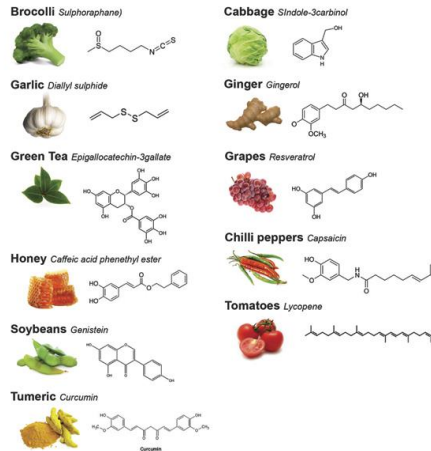


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Phytochemicals

- Phytochemicals give plants their distinctive color, smell, taste
- Provide MANY health benefits
 - Especially for fighting cancer!
- 1000's discovered so far!



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Minimally Processed – Whole Foods

- Good choices:
 - Foods not in a package
 - Foods that will eventually rot
 - Foods with 5 or less ingredients
- Poor choices:
 - Foods with ingredients you can not pronounce
 - Foods containing partially hydrogenated oil, high-fructose corn syrup, or any artificial colors, flavors, or sweeteners
 - Foods your grandmother would not know was food

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½ Plate Vegetables
= the perfect plate!



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Workplace Eating Tips for Everybody



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Plan & Pack

- **“Failure to plan is planning to fail”**
- Pack as much as possible
 - Healthier!
 - Save money!
 - Bring in bulk (i.e. bag of oranges, jar of nut butter, Kind or protein bars, tub of hummus or yogurt, fresh veggies, string cheese pack, etc.)



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Skipping Meals and Snacks

- Do not skip meals
 - Aim to eat at least every 3-4 hours throughout the day
- Skipping meals =
 - More likely to overeat at other times
 - More likely to gain weight
 - Mood is negatively impacted
 - Concentration suffers as blood sugar and energy declines
- Set alarms!!!



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Balanced Eating

- Start the day with a protein

- ▣ Watch those high sugar breakfasts!



- Continue to have balance with your meals and snacks

- ▣ Balanced Eating = **health protein + complex carb**
 - ▣ Helps with for blood sugar control, sustained energy, healthy weight

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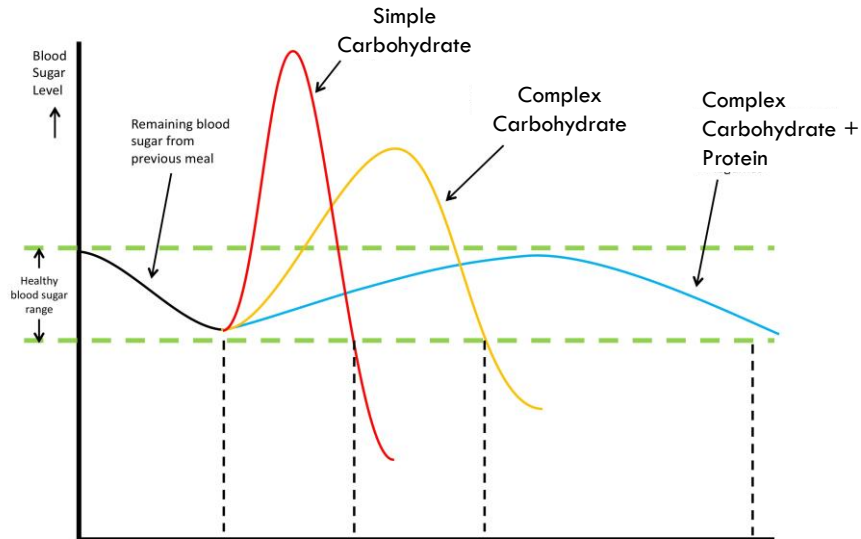
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Balanced Eating = Balanced Blood Sugar



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Blood Sugar Levels after Eating

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Carbohydrates

Simple Carbs- choose LESS often

- “Whites” (white bread, white rice, white pasta, regular crackers)
- White potatoes
- Soda, Juice
- Candy, Sweets
- Sugar, Honey, Jelly, Jam

Complex Carbs- choose MORE often

- Whole wheat/whole grain bread
- Brown rice, Whole wheat pasta
- Whole grain crackers
- Starchy vegetables (sweet potato, winter squash, corn, peas)
- Whole fruits
- Other whole grains (oats, quinoa, bran, bulger, etc)



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Proteins

Healthy Proteins

- **Lean meat/poultry, fish** -3 oz
- **Cheese** - 1 oz, 1 slice
- **Cottage cheese** - 1/2 cup
- **Eggs, egg whites** - 1 egg, 2 egg whites)
- **Greek yogurt** - 6 oz
- **Beans (black, kidney, lentils, etc)** - 1/2 cup
- **Hummus** - 1/4 cup
- **Nut butters (peanut, almond, cashew)** - 2 Tbs
- **Seeds, Nuts** - 1/4 cup



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Keep it Simple!!



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Simple Breakfasts

- **Easy: Overnight Oats ~ 3 minutes** night before
 - Oats + Milk + Chia Seeds + Fruit + Nuts
 - Mix oats & milk night before (1-1 ratio) and put in fridge
 - Add toppings in morning and eat! (option to warm)
- **Easier: Microwave Eggs ~ 60 seconds**
 - Eggs + Whole Grain Bread + Cheese
 - Mix eggs in mug or small bowl, microwave 60s
- **Easiest: Grab and Go Breakfasts ~ 0 seconds**
 - Greek yogurt, Kind/protein bars, fruit & nuts/cheese



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Simple Lunches

- **Easy: Power Bowl**
 - Veggies + Protein + Grain
 - Veggies: frozen, roasted from meal prep, fresh pre-chopped/salad bar
 - Protein: rotisserie chicken, canned beans, cooked tofu cubes
 - Grain: frozen brown/wild rice, prepped quinoa
 - Tip: Keep different dressings or toppings at work
- **Easier: Tuna, Crackers & Fruit**
 - Keep canned tuna + whole grain crackers + olive oil/mayo at work
- **Easiest: PB & J**
 - Store bread in freezer & keep peanut butter at work



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Simple Snacks

Complex Carbohydrate	Healthy Protein	calories/protein*
½ cup pineapple (C)	+ ½ cup 2% cottage cheese (P)	130 cal/13g
1 cup raw vegetables (C)	+ ¼ cup hummus (P)	150 cal/4g
1 cup berries (C)	+ ½ cup frozen Greek yogurt (P)	150 cal/6g
½ whole grain tortilla (C)	+ 3 slices turkey breast (P)	160 cal/14g
1 pear (C)	+ 1 string cheese (P)	170 cal/8g
1 slice whole grain toast (C)	+ 1 hard boiled egg (P)	180 cal/9g
10 corn chips chips (C)	+ ¼ cup black bean dip (P)	185 cal/6g
1 banana (C)	+ 1 Tbs almond butter (P)	190 cal/5g
¼ cup granola (C)	+ 6 oz Greek yogurt (P)	200 cal/16g
1 apple (C)	+ 2 Tbs peanut butter (P)	215 cal/8g
6 whole grain crackers (C)	+ 1 slice 2% cheese (P)	220 cal/11g
¼ cup dried fruit (C)	+ 1 handful (1 oz) mixed nuts (P)	250 cal/5g

*varies depending on brand

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Hydration



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Hydration at Work

□ Stay hydrated!

- Shoot for **AT LEAST 64oz (8 cups) of water daily**
- Tips to remember:
 - Alarms, habit stacking, apps, keeping it visible, tracking



□ Dehydration at work =

- Poor productivity
- Reduced cognitive abilities
- Slower reaction times
- Low morale
- Fatigue

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Eating Tips- Office



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Office Eating Tips

- Take time to take your lunch!
 - Avoid distracted eating
- Keep unhealthy food out of the office – or at least out of sight!
 - Keep healthy food visible!



- Move!
 - Aim to move regularly, especially after meals = helps control blood sugar, improve energy, decreased risk of cancer

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Eating Tips – In the Field



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In the Field Eating Tips

□ Take time to take your lunch!

- Avoid distracted eating



□ Keep food safe

- Pack perishables in cooler w/ ice packs or frozen beverages
- Store at 40° F or cooler, keep out of sun, restock for long trips
- Frequently wash coolers and lunch boxes

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Staying healthy when purchasing food...



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Best Vending Machine Choices

Forgot your snack? Try these...

- Small bag of peanuts, almonds or trail mix
- Popcorn
- Whole-wheat crackers with peanut butter or cheese
- Whole-grain granola or cereal bars
- Graham or animal crackers
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Fresh fruit
- Dried fruit such as raisins, cranberries or apricots
- Microwave soup or oatmeal



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Stay Smart at the Gas Station

- **Fresh Fruit** – Bananas, apples, citrus fruits, pre-cut fruit cups, etc
- **Raw nuts or sunflower seeds, peanut butter and nut butter packets**
- **All natural popcorn**
- **Greek Yogurt** - Make sure the yogurt you're picking is plain, as it will contain the least amount of added sugars and the most protein.
- **Jerky** – plain beef or turkey jerky is a great protein, just watch the sodium
- **Vegetable cups (raw veggies)** – pair with hummus or if you like – mustard!
- **String Cheese**
- **Hard-boiled eggs**
- **Tuna in water**
- **Protein bars** – be careful with these – make sure they are low sugar variety
- **Oatmeal** – ideally raw oats with minimal sugar added

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Better Fast Food Choices

- Take your time to study the menu
 - Starbucks: **Egg white, spinach feta wrap** (290 calories, 8g fat, 20g protein, 6 g fiber, 840mg sodium)
 - McDonald's: **Hamburger** (250 calories, 9g fat, 12g protein, 31 g carbs, 1g fiber, 510mg sodium)

- Make healthy substitutions & sides
 - Can order just the meat (burgers, chicken sandwich)
 - Order burger wrapped in lettuce in place of bun
 - Order fresh fruit or side salad in place of fries
 - Add your own healthy sides (cut up fruit, carrot sticks, sliced peppers & cucumber, etc.)

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Restaurant Eating

- Choose **whole grain options** for bread or rice whenever possible for more fiber and better blood sugar balance
- Look for **lean proteins** (i.e. grilled chicken)
- **Add veggies**
 - Add to sandwiches, order as extra sides...
- Don't snooze on **soups!**
- Not all salads are healthy
 - Look for lean proteins and fat from avocados, olive oil or nuts
- Have them **wrap up ½ your meal** before it is served



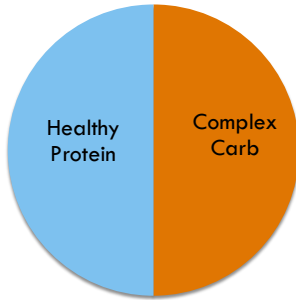
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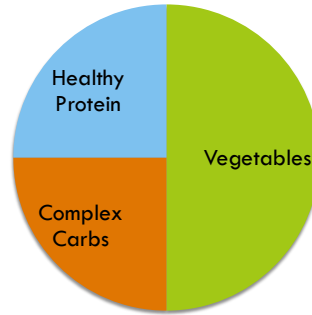
A healthy eating day



Breakfast/Snacks



Lunch/Dinner



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Questions??



THANK YOU!!

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Stress – why worry?



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Impact of Stress on Health

- Stress negatively impacts mind/body in MANY ways
 - Inflammation root of many adverse consequences
 - Increased risk for cancer, heart disease and other chronic diseases
 - Increased pain
 - Increased blood sugar levels and blood pressure
 - Decreased mental alertness and risk for neurodegenerative diseases
 - Decreased metabolism
 - Decreased immune system

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What's food got to do with it?



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Managing Stress with Nutrition

- Avoid foods that make stress effects worse: sugar, caffeine, and alcohol



- Maintain balanced blood sugar levels



- Eat foods known to reduce stress & balance moods



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Foods that increase stress

- Alcohol
- Caffeine
- Sugar
- Refined/Processed grains
- Artificial flavoring/colors, preservatives
- Fried foods/unhealthy fats



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Stress Busting Foods

- Complex carbohydrates
- Vitamin C foods
- Fatty fish
- Milk
- Nuts
- Decaffeinated tea



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Stress Busting with Nutrition...

□ Complex Carbohydrates

- Carbohydrates release serotonin – the feel good chemical
- **HOWEVER** – be cautious of simple carbs and blood sugar spikes - follow advice from blood sugar part – choose COMPLEX carbs (and try to pair with a protein)



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Stress Busting with Nutrition...

□ Vitamin C foods..

- Increases chemicals in our body that make us feel calm
- Our bodies need more vitamin C during times of stress because it uses it more rapidly
- **Examples:** Oranges, citrus fruits, blueberries, strawberries, kiwis, red and green peppers, leafy greens, broccoli



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Stress Busting with Nutrition...

□ Fatty fish

- Omega-3 fatty acids found in fish help relieve depression and reduce stress hormones
- Aim to eat fatty fish at least 2x per week to prevent the blues and other health benefits
- **Examples of fish high in O-3's:**
salmon, sardines, anchovies, herring and white fish



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Stress Busting with Nutrition...

□ Milk

- Contains chemicals that make you feel calm and happy
- Also contains calcium which helps relieve anxiety and mood swings
- If you don't drink milk (or have trouble tolerating lactose, other dairy products to try are cheese and yogurt - hard cheese and Greek yogurt have least amount of lactose)



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Stress Busting with Nutrition...

□ Nuts

- Amongst MANY other health benefits – nuts are rich in B vitamins which help the body deal with stress
- Also contain magnesium which plays a significant role in regulating the nervous system and stabilizing energy



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Stress Busting with Nutrition...

□ Decaffeinated tea

- Been used for centuries to help manage stress and maintain calm
- Flavanoids found in tea reduce the stress hormones and act of drinking tea itself can promote calm feelings
- BUT – because caffeine aggravates the stress response and may blunt the calming effects of the teas, stick with the decaf..



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Other Mood Boosting Foods

□ Apples

- Contain phytochemical called quercetin
- Increase serotonin and dopamine (“feel good” chemicals) in the brain



□ Kale, spinach & other leafy greens

- Contain tryptophan
- Neurotransmitter responsible for feelings of happiness and well-being

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Other Mood Boosting Foods

□ Kimchi, yogurt & other fermented foods

- Fermented foods provide “probiotics” (healthy gut bacteria)
- Gut/brain connection: Healthy gut = reduced anxiety and depression



□ Garlic & Onions

- Contain “prebiotics”
- Provide food for probiotics in the gut leading to healthy bacteria balance and healthy gut 😊

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Other Mood Boosting Foods

□ Chocolate

- Contains flavonoids = phytochemicals with MANY health benefits
 - Decreases inflammation, improves cognitive function, improves blood sugar/insulin sensitivity, good for heart and blood vessel health
- Mood booster!!
 - Study showed improvement in mood with palatable chocolate for ~3 minutes after consumption
- Aim for over 70% for health benefits (minimal sugar)



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