

GOOD FOOD, GOOD MOOD



Angela Minnis – Dietitian Community Mental Health

What we crave vs what we need

Sad face:

- irritable
- anxious
- mood swings
- feeling low
- lethargic

Happy face:

- feeling generally happy
- more alert and active
- less moody



Food And Mood

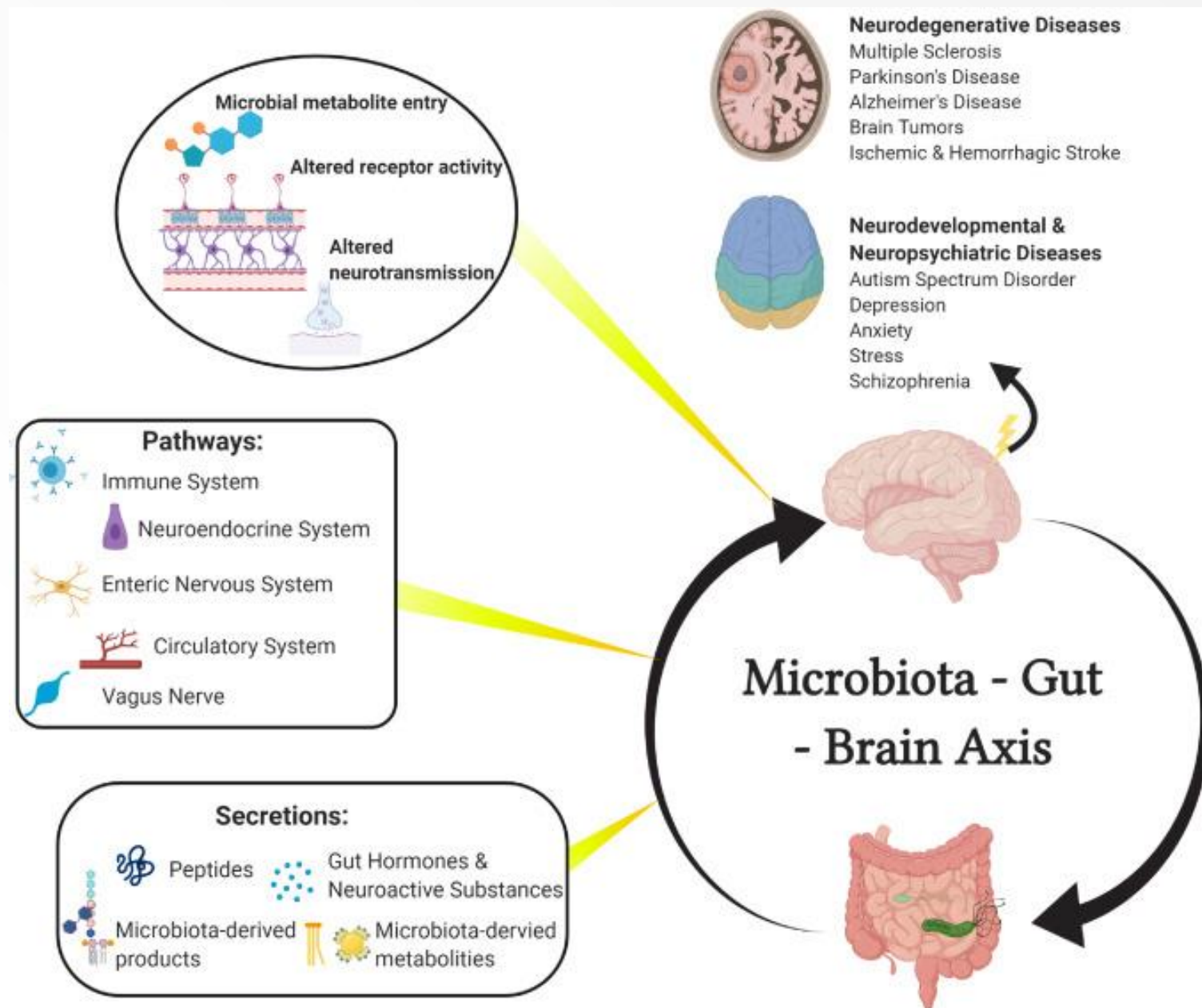
HOW DOES WHAT WE EAT AFFECT OUR MOOD?

Our guts, **enteric nervous system**, and our brains, **central nervous system** (CNS) talk to each other via the gut-brain axis

Body processes that can influence the messages between the gut and the brain:

- inflammation
- oxidative stress
- gut microbiota





Neurotransmitters and mood

- Did you know many of the neurotransmitters that impact your mood are produced in your gut?
- Your gut bacteria or gut microbiome can contribute to development of some neurotransmitters:
 - GABA
 - Dopamine



Important Nutrients for a Happy Brain

- Carbohydrate and Protein (tryptophan) – positively affect serotonin levels
- Zinc, Vitamin D3, EPA, DHA – useful for reducing effects of depression

Starved Brain = poor concentration, mood changes and cravings

Carbohydrates are the brain's perfect fuel source

- If you are not consuming them then your body uses up it's stores of glycogen in the liver and muscles



What can I eat to improve my mood

- Aim for at least 5 serves of Vegetables a day and 2 serves of fruit
- Switch to whole grains
- Aim for 8-10 glasses water a day
- Focus on healthy fats:
 - Extra virgin olive oil
 - Avocado
 - Eating oily fish such as salmon or tuna



What can I eat to improve my mood

- Include Probiotic foods
- Cut back on take away, soft drink etc.
- Enjoy a serve of nuts each day
- Eat more legumes



Some super gut loving foods

- Bananas – rich in tyrosine, B group Vitamins and Magnesium
- Fermented foods – kombucha, sauerkraut, miso, kefir
- Dark Chocolate – rich in tryptophan



Mediterranean Diet Pyramid

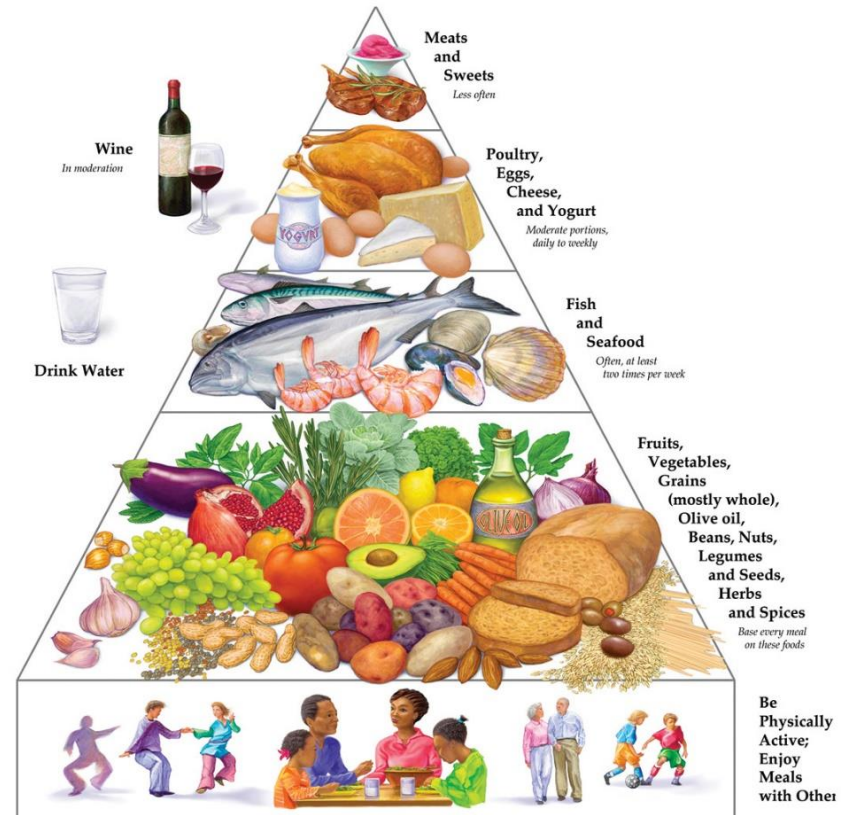


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Mediterranean Diet

- Increased intake of plant-based foods with EVOO as the main source of fat
- Minimal red meat, Eat fish or seafood 2-3 times a week
- **SMILES TRIAL** – Showed significant improvements in reported depressive and anxiety symptoms in the diet group compared to controls
- Decreased intake of processed foods

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid

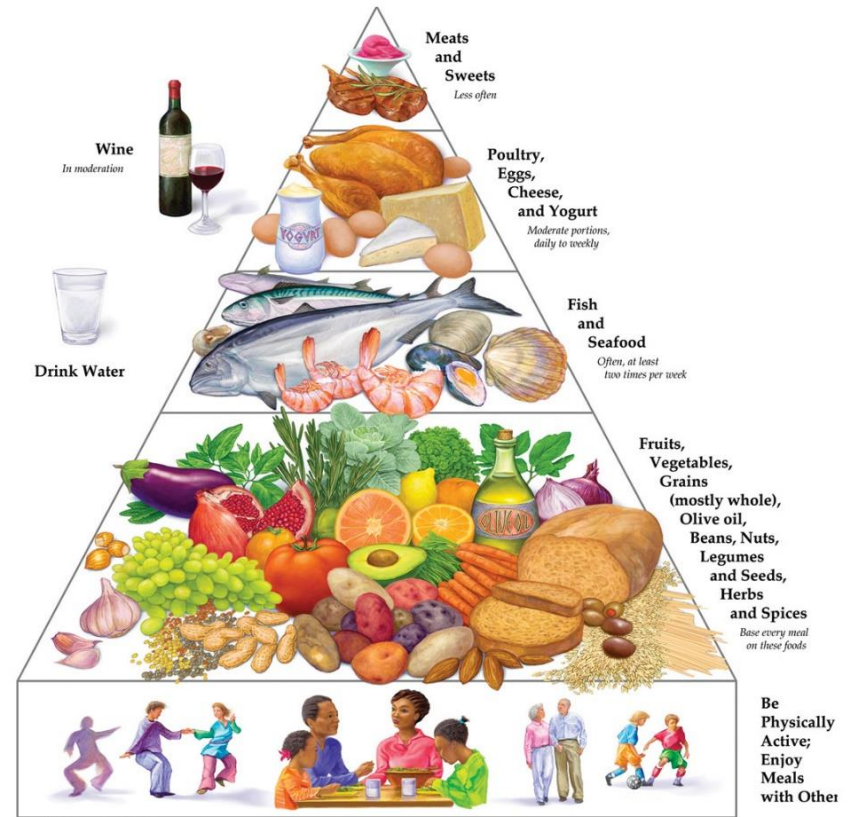


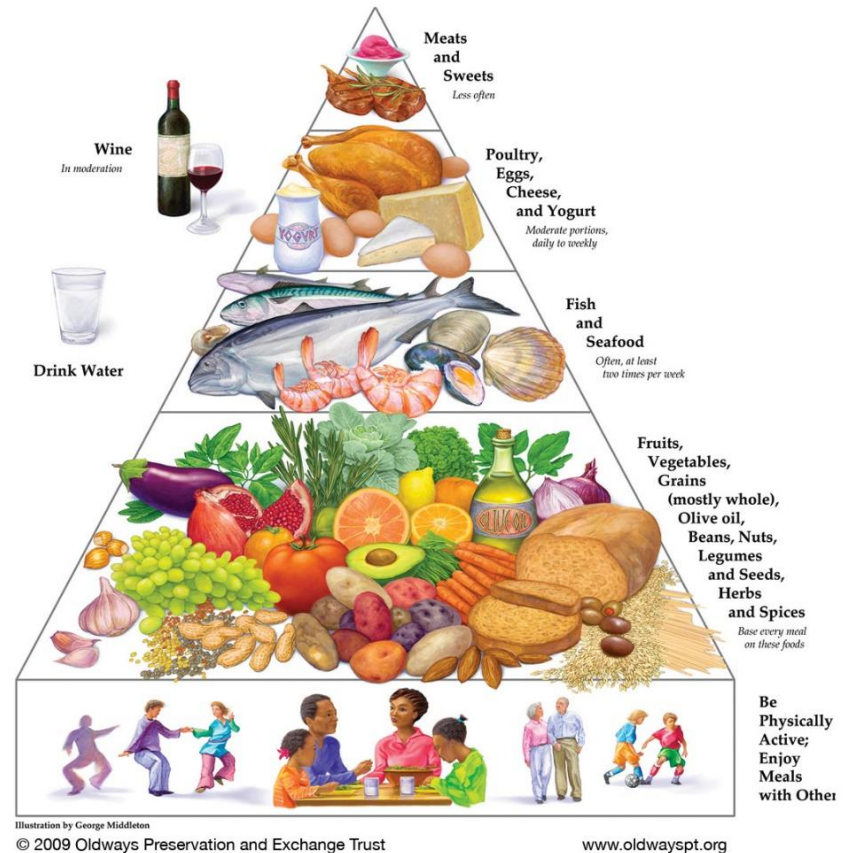
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Mediterranean diet

- EVOO main added fat – 60 ml daily
- 2-3 serves fish/seafood a week
- Legumes 2-3 times a week
- Serve of nuts daily
- 5-6 serves vegetables / 2-3 serves fruit
- Limited red meat
- Fermented dairy / yoghurt everyday
- Wholegrain cereals
- Wine in moderation with meals

Mediterranean Diet Pyramid



MORE INFORMATION

- **Food and Mood Centre** – <https://foodandmoodcentre.com.au/>
- **WIRL** – <https://app.wellnessirl.com.au/>
 - App available on iOS or online
 - Recipes, menu planner, articles, podcast. Food for mental well-being resource
- **Peninsula Health** – <https://www.peninsulahealth.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Food-for-Mental-Wellbeing-Resource.pdf>
- **The Resilience Project** – Digital Wellbeing series on LATTE
 - Monash Health Employee Wellbeing Program
 - Also have their own app
- **Healthy Body and Mind Hub** – <https://healthatworkhub.com.au/monash-health/good-food-good-mood>
 - Monash Health Employee Wellbeing Program

