



A Study of Diet and its Effect on How We Feel

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Part 1 - Diet and Depressive Symptoms

Dietary patterns have been shown to influence depressive symptoms, such as decreased mood, in several different ways. Whole, nutrient-dense diets consisting of high intakes of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, olive oil, nuts, and seeds, have been shown to decrease depressive symptoms and protect against depression. On the other hand, calorie-dense diets characterized by high consumptions of highly processed foods, red and/or processed meats, refined grains, sweets, high-fat dairy products, and low intakes of fruits and vegetables are associated with an increased risk of depression and depressive symptoms.

How Does Diet Affect How We Feel

The brain needs adequate nutrient intake to function to its fullest potential

The neurotransmitter modulator BDNF is linked to how we feel. BDNF levels are influenced by diet

Chronic inflammation has been linked to depressive symptoms. Diet affects inflammatory processes in the body

The gut microbiome is thought to influence how we feel. The gut microbiome is directly influenced by diet

Many evidence-based research studies are supporting the role diet plays in depression and how we feel.

Below are two examples of the many research studies examining the role diet plays in depression.

Jacka et al. (2017)

Researchers conducted a single-blind randomized control trial examining participants being treated for depression. One group focused on incorporating a Mediterranean-style diet into their lives and met with a dietary coach. The control group continued eating their regular diet and met regularly with a researcher to talk. The Mediterranean Diet intervention group had significantly fewer depressive symptoms than the control group. Furthermore, 32.3% of the Mediterranean diet group participants went into complete remission of their depression diagnosis.

Francis et al. (2019)

Researchers conducted a single-blinded randomized control trial investigating whether a diet change group would reduce levels of depressive symptoms as compared to a customary diet control group. The diet change group watched and re-watched a 13-minute video from a registered dietician and were encouraged to increase compliance with a Mediterranean style diet while decreasing intakes of refined carbohydrates, sugar, fatty and processed meats, and sugary drinks. The customary diet control group received no instructions regarding diet. The results showed that the diet change group significantly reduced depressive symptoms compared to the control group, and these results persisted after three months.

Part 2 - Volunteering to Join a Research Study

Volunteers are needed to join a research study called *Eat Better, Feel Better* examining the effects that dietary change has on depressive symptoms and mood.

What to Expect

The goal of this study is to increase nutritional awareness and promote dietary change. Participants will be asked to review an educational presentation aimed at increasing their knowledge of how food affects their mood. The presentation also promotes dietary change and provides supplemental resources should the participant want additional help when making dietary changes.

Time Commitment

Participants will be asked to fill out a pre-survey questionnaire. Participants will then receive an educational presentation that will take 40 minutes to complete. Participants will be encouraged to review the presentation at their own pace. Participants are asked to make dietary changes based on the information provided to them. After 4 weeks, participants will be asked to complete a post-survey questionnaire.

Why Join?

This study may:

1. Increase your knowledge of food and diet
2. Help you eat a healthier, more balanced diet
3. Potentially reduce depression symptoms and improve mood

Disclaimer:

This study is not intended to cure depressive symptoms and makes no guarantees of symptom alleviation. Individuals with serious symptoms or thoughts of self-harm should seek professional help immediately.

Part 3 - Who is Eligible for this Study?

We Are Looking For Participants Who Fit This Criteria:

- Adults ages 18-65 years old
- Believes they frequently experience any of the feelings listed below:
 - o Sad
 - o Tired
 - o Fatigued
 - o Gloomy
 - o Jittery
 - o Nervous
 - o Fed up
 - o Grouchy
- English language speaking and reading
- Access to the internet
- Valid email address

Where Can I Sign Up For The Study?

If you are interested in joining the *Eat Better, Feel Better* study and believe you are eligible, please click on the link below or copy and paste the URL into a web-browser

https://regiscollege.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bEMFoNsHLTJkTbg



If you have any questions about eligibility, please contact the study coordinator:

Study Coordinator: Sarah Raymond
Email Address: sray999@regiscollege.edu



About the Study Coordinator

Hi everyone! My name is Sarah Raymond, and I am the study coordinator of the *Eat Better, Feel Better* research study. I graduated in 2017 from the University of Massachusetts Lowell with a Bachelor's in Science Nursing degree. Since then, I began practicing as a registered nurse in the states of Massachusetts and California. My background includes:

- Rehabilitation nursing.
- Post-acute care nursing.
- Medical-surgical-telemetry nursing.
- Intermediate care nursing.

In 2019, I was accepted into the Doctor of Nursing Family Practitioner Program at Regis College to pursue my dream of becoming a Nurse Practitioner. I wanted to become a Nurse Practitioner because I strongly believe in preventative care and promoting a healthy lifestyle throughout the lifespan. With that said, my doctoral project is centered around nutritional psychology and how diet affects depression. My goal is to integrate nutritional psychology into my clinical practice and the discipline of nursing as a whole. I want to thank The Center of Nutritional Psychology for helping me to pursue this goal.