

Anxiety and Depression: How Nutrition Helps

Mind Body Connection:

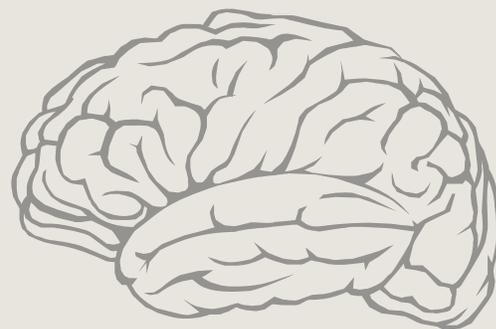
Gut-Brain AXIS

- Anxiety and depression don't just affect **mood**--they shape **hunger, digestion, and energy.**
- **Skipping meals** frequently or **lack of appetite** is common
- Increased **cravings** for **highly palatable foods, caffeine and "comfort foods"**
- **Gut discomfort** or **nausea** during stress
- **Emotional eating** or **food restriction** is common

Nourishment as a Form of Regulation

Regular BALANCED Meals

- **Protein** ---> helps make dopamine & serotonin for motivation and calm
- **Carbohydrates** ---> steady glucose supports focus and energy
- **Omega 3 Fats** ---> helps with neuroplasticity
- **B Vitamins, iron & Zinc**---> supports brain and nervous system function. Helps create neurotransmitters.



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Routine before Perfection

Predictable eating times **reduces anxiety and lift depression** by telling your body it's safe. Try....

- 3 meals + 1-2 snacks daily
- Include ALL food groups-- don't try to cut out "bad" foods
- Hydrate (hot tea, water, juice, all count!)
- Get on a regular sleep routine



You don't need to load up on supplements:

- **Glucose:** You need a carbohydrate source at each meal and snack: grains, rice, cereal, crackers, fruit, milk/yogurt, bread, beans, potatoes
- **Phytochemicals:** eat from the rainbow at least 3 times a day (vegetables and fruits)
- **Omega-3s (DHA + EPA):** fatty fish (salmon), nuts (walnuts), chia seeds, flaxseed
- **B Vitamins, zinc and Iron:** lean meats, spinach, dark chocolate, fortified whole grains, beans, lentils