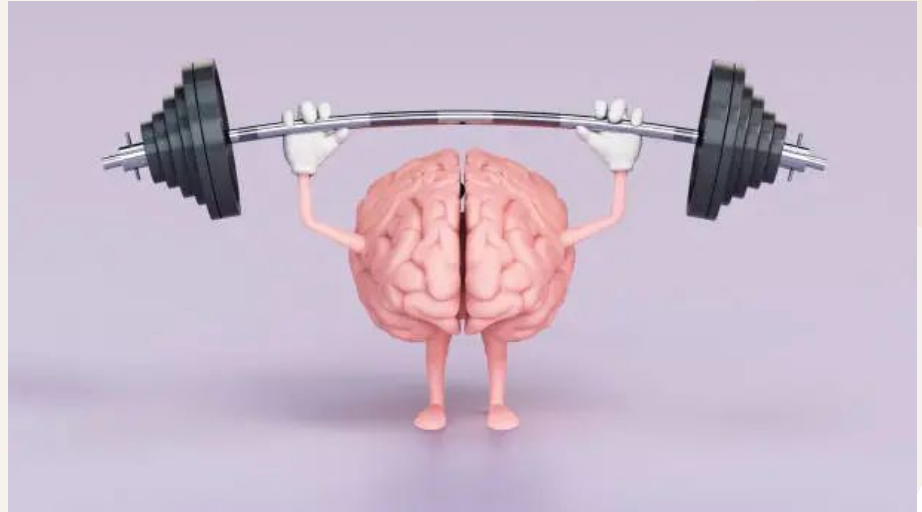


Nutrition Concerns Among College Students



Primary Concerns Related to Brain Health

- Lowered mood
- Poor memory
- Reduced Concentration
- Inappropriate drug use
- Mental health struggles



Nutrition and Mood



Negative Associations

- Skipping meals, snack infrequency (eating regularly every 3-4 hours)
- Ultra processed foods
- Simple Carbohydrates
- Sugar and Caffeine

Positive Associations

- Eating with friends and family
- Mindful eating
- Eating Breakfast



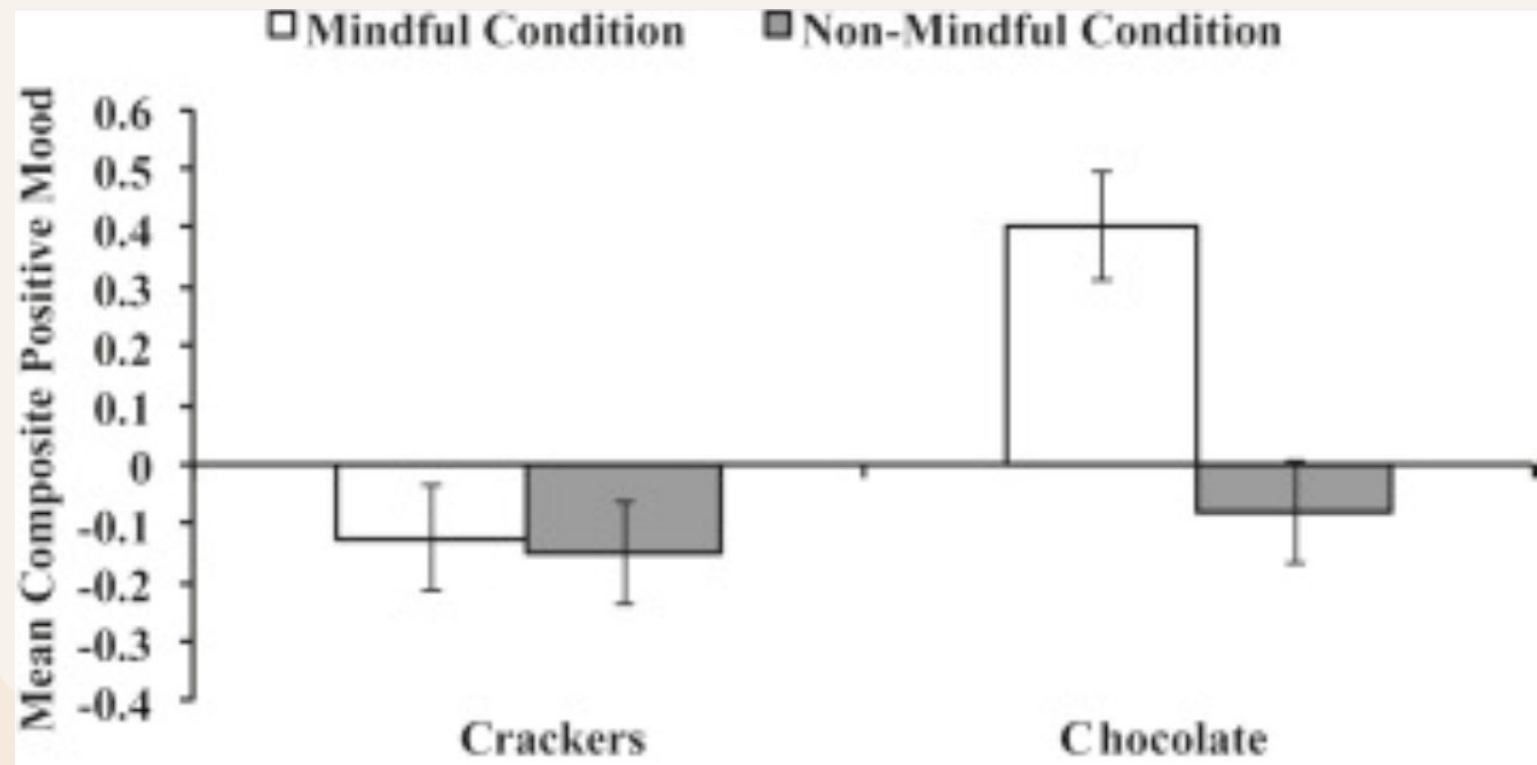
Nutrition and Mood



Production of Dopamine and Serotonin


- **Whole Grains:** stabilizes mood through glucose
- **Antioxidants:** combats inflammation and stress in the brain
- **Omega-3 Fatty Acids**
- **B-Vitamins:** protective effects against depression





Nutrition and Concentration



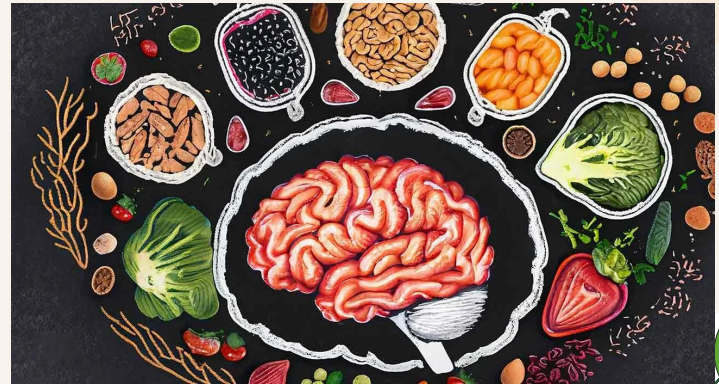
- **Protein-rich foods:** many neurotransmitters are derived from amino acids
 - L-theanine: focus and sleep quality
 - **Antioxidants:** protect and enhance communication between neurons
 - **Whole grains:** sustained energy
 - **Water**
 - Low doses of **caffeine**
- 

Nutrition and Memory

- **Mediterranean Diet:** linked to better retainment of information
- **Antioxidants:** protects brain neurons from toxins
- **Folate:** helps slow progression of brain aging
- **Flavonoids:** help combat inflammation and slows brain aging

Headaches and Migraine Relief

- Omega-3 Fatty Acids
- Magnesium
- Fiber Rich Foods



Mediterranean Diet



Includes all previously mentioned nutrients

- Plant-based diet (6 servings of fruit + veggies per day)
- Whole grains (3-6 servings per day)
- Legumes (3 servings per week)
- Healthy fats (1-4 servings per day)
- Fish (3 servings per week)
- Nuts (3 servings per week)



Drug Use and Brain Health



Commonly Abused Drugs

- Impairs cognitive function (short + long term)
- Alcohol → disorientation, impaired coordination
- Marijuana → altered mood, appetite, reaction time
- Opioids → pain relief, drowsiness, euphoria



Disordered Eating and Brain Health

Negative Cognitive Effects

- **Mood and appetite** regulation
- **Cognition** → impulsivity, memory, perception, concentration
- **Fear response** → over sensitive to stress
- **Reward System** → decrease enjoyment, satisfaction, and motivation



Summary and Campus Resources



Important Nutrients for Brain Health

- Omega-3 fatty acids (1.1 to 1.6 g)
- Fiber (26 to 28 g)
- Folate (400 mcg)
- B12 (2.6 mcg)
- Magnesium (310 to 420 mg)
- Protein (46 to 56 g)
- Water (2.7 to 3.7 liters)



On-Campus Food Resources

- Everybody Eats Program
- Food Assistance and Wellbeing Program (Tues 1-4 pm + Sat 2-5 pm)



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Directions for Activity

Objective:

The goal of this activity is to design a plate using cut-out pieces of food that are beneficial for brain health. Participants will learn about different foods that promote brain function and create their own plate based on healthy choices.

- Introduce the food items
- Select the pre-cut paper foods that you believe are beneficial for brain health.
- Choose at least 3 options to assemble a meal or snack, making sure to include all the key components for brain health.

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to list three nutrients that benefit their cognitive health
- Students will be able to construct a meal that follows a MyPlate format structure that promotes their brain health.