

# Munch Your Way to a Good Mood

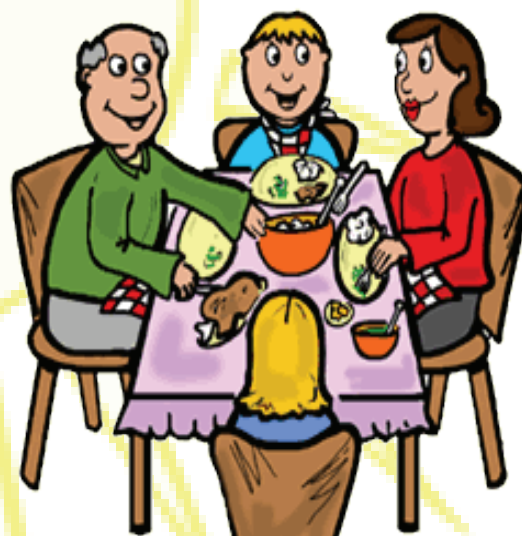
## Your Mood and the Brain

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Your brain produces chemicals called neurotransmitters which control things like alertness, memory, learning, and mood. The levels of one neurotransmitter, serotonin, has been specifically linked to mood. The higher your serotonin levels, the less likely you are to experience depression and the more likely you are to have a stable mood. Vitamin D, Thiamine, Folic Acid, and Vitamin B 12 have all been shown to help increase serotonin levels. Tryptophan, a precursor for serotonin, is also necessary for serotonin production. However, there has been some controversy with the FDA and the ban of certain tryptophan supplements, indicating food may be the safest source.

Omega 3-fatty acids, which are very good for your heart, also improve the health of your brain. Many studies have shown that low levels of omega 3's were found in patients diagnosed with depression. Higher levels of omega 3's were associated with better moods. Getting enough omega 3's may assist not only in improving your mood, but your risk for many other chronic diseases.

Click on the nutrients below to find out how much of each you should be getting for a sunnier day!



Mood Enhancing Munchies	
Nutrient	Food Sources
<u>OMEGA 3-FATTY ACIDS</u>	Walnuts, salmon, flaxseed, soybeans, fortified foods
<u>THIAMINE</u>	Fortified breads and cereals, lean meats, whole grains, dried beans
<u>VITAMIN D</u>	Milk, fortified soy-milk, eggs, salmon, fortified cereal
<u>FOLIC ACID</u>	Fortified cereal, green veggies, eggs, beans
<u>VITAMIN B 12</u>	Fortified cereal, lean beef, yogurt, salmon, tuna fish
<u>TRYPTOPHAN</u>	Cheese, chicken, eggs, fish, milk, peanut butter, soy

References:  
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