



Love “Comfort Food?” Try Good Mood Food Instead

From Screening for Mental Health

The term “comfort food” makes us think of mashed potatoes, meatloaf, chili, and other warm and smooth tasty dishes. However, what makes you temporarily comfortable may not necessarily boost your mood. It turns out that the foods that improve our moods are not necessarily the ones you crave – except for chocolate.

Carbohydrates, the enemy of many diets, are actually important for health and mood. However, complex carbohydrates (also called “smart carbs”) are the types you need to keep your blood sugar levels steady. Think about whole grain breads, brown rice, nuts, legumes, and low fat yogurt and milk. Carbohydrates contain serotonin, the “feel good” chemical in the brain. Unprocessed fruits and vegetables are also a great source of complex carbohydrates.

The omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty fish, nuts, and green vegetables are good for you mood, and some research even shows it can help combat depression. Don’t forget about your vitamin B-12, either. This mighty vitamin is plentiful in low-fat animal products and fish. Some research shows that people who are low in B-12 are at increased risk of depression.

Eating healthy foods may not always boost your mood. If you are worried that your moods have been really low lately, check your mental health at www.mentalhealthscreening.org/screening/MIIAWellness.