

Surprising Ways to Boost Your Mood in 2021



The relationship

Think of our bodies like an engine. An engine needs a particular kind of fuel to function optimally – give it the wrong fuel, and it might begin to slow, break-down and act up, give it the right fuel and it will run like a racehorse! If we supply our bodies with healthy fuel from our diet, we are giving our cells energy, providing our brain with resources to support cognitive functions and delivering the building blocks needed to create neurotransmitters and hormones. And all of these things impact our mood!

There are several elements that contribute to this premium fuel source for optimal mood including eating balanced plates for energy, nutrient intake/deficiencies, gut health and consumption of stimulants. Let's delve into each one.

Balance your blood sugar

When your blood sugar is on a roller coaster ride all day, your mood is likely to follow suit. Ever wonder why you get irritable and frustrated when you skip a meal?

Over consumption of sugars, refined carbohydrates, alcohol and skipping meals contribute to low and high blood sugar. Not only can these fluctuations in blood sugar impact physical health, which puts stress on many body systems, they can also affect your emotional wellbeing.

Aim for well balanced meals at every opportunity combining good quality fats, protein, complex carbohydrates and plenty of fruit and veg.

Focus on nutrient intake

Did you know that certain nutrients including B vitamins, Vitamin D and Magnesium all play a part in our energy, relaxation, brain function and mood! Aim to include variety and colours of fruit and veg when you possibly can to ensure you are getting in adequate nutrients through your diet.

When it comes to Vitamin D, the NHS recommends that between the months of October to April that people living in the UK take the recommended dose of vitamin D, 10mg or 400iu, in supplement form. This is down to the fact that our best source of vitamin D comes from sunshine exposure on our skin, which is sparse during the summer months. My favourite vitamin D is [BetterYou's Vitamin D Spray](#).

Support your gut health

Our gut has been named our second brain – and for good reason! Over 95% of serotonin, one of our neurotransmitters responsible for feelings of happiness, is created in the gut!

Be mindful of stimulants

Caffeine and alcohol can often be a trigger or potentially exacerbate your mood/mental health concerns. When we consume caffeine, our bodies produce stress hormones in response. These stress hormones can then go on to trigger mood swings and feelings of stress, which is not ideal when you are trying to manage your mood. Alcohol is a known depressant, and can affect our mood, energy, immune system and sleep when consumed frequently.

If you notice that you feel anxious, irritable, low in mood or jittery when consuming these beverages then aim to reduce and/or eliminate them from your diet.

The role of nutrition in Mental Health

Many of us know that eating a healthy diet is going to be beneficial for our physical health, but are you aware that the foods we do and don't consume can also impact our mental health? Read on to understand the link between nutrition and mental health and how we can utilise diet to support our mood.

About the author

Clarissa Lenherr is a BANT Registered Nutritionist trained in Nutritional Therapy and founder of Clarissa Lenherr Nutrition (introduced via Stretching the City).



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