

LIFESTYLE FOR A

healthy mind

2022 Week Two

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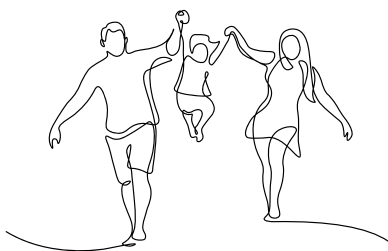
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Music for Your Mind

Listening to music is enjoyable and entertaining, but did you know that music could make you healthier? Music can energize your body, relax your mind, help with pain management, and it can even boost your mental performance and slow cognitive decline. Music can influence your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Here are just a few ways that music impacts your health.

Music can help you pick up the pace when walking and running. Listening to music while you exercise changes your perception of exertion and you are less likely to notice that you are working harder. Listening to fast-paced music can also help boost your motivation and enjoyment of physical activity.

For a boost in your mental performance, turn on a little background music. Instrumental tracks, played quietly, are best, and research has shown that playing more upbeat music led to improvements in processing speed and benefits in memory in older adults.

Have you ever thought of music as a weight loss tool? Listening to mellow music and dimming the lights while you eat can help you consume food more slowly, allowing you to be more aware of when you feel full. In a similar way, music can be an effective way to cope with stress, to soothe the mind, and help you relax.

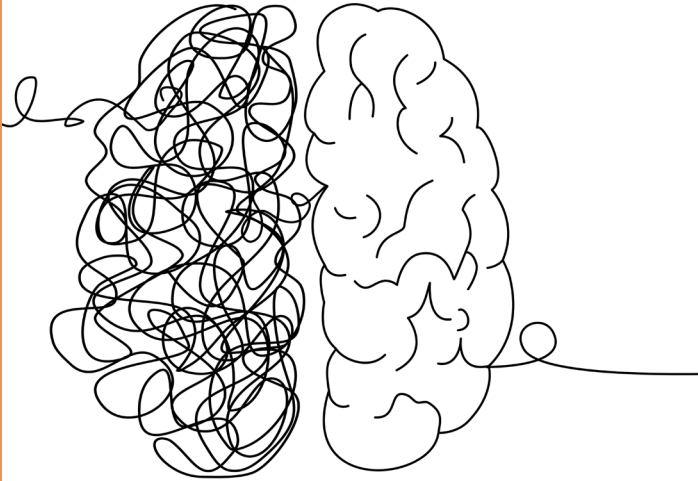
If you have symptoms of depression, music therapy can be a safe and effective way to help manage those symptoms. In a similar way, listening to music can be very helpful in the management of chronic pain. A study with fibromyalgia patients found that those who listened to music just one hour a day experienced a significant reduction in pain in comparison to a control group.

Finally, music can help you fall asleep and get better quality sleep. Playing relaxing classical music can be a safe, effective, and affordable remedy for insomnia.

More About Brain Health

Age related cognitive decline is extremely common. While death rates for heart disease and cancer are declining, the death rate for Alzheimer's disease is increasing and it is a growing public health crisis in Kansas. Other forms of dementia and cognitive decline are also increasing. Dementia, which is a general term for the impaired ability to remember, think, or make decisions, affects older adults, predominantly, but it is not considered a part of normal aging.

In addition to dementia, subjective cognitive decline (SCD), and Alzheimer's disease, poor mental health can increase your risk for many types of physical health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Having poor mental health does not mean that you have a mental illness, and your mental health can change over time and be influenced by many factors. When demands placed on you exceed your resources and coping skills, your mental health could suffer. Situations like economic hardship, long working hours, long-term caregiving, and challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic are some examples of this. Poor mental health can also lead to mental illness.



Turn Over a New Leaf

One of the most important components of the MIND diet is leafy green vegetables. They are rich in nutrients known to be protective of cognition and brain function, including folate, vitamin E, lutein, and beta carotene. Research shows that eating one serving of leafy greens per day can make a significant impact on brain health.

Foods included in the superfood category of leafy greens include spinach, kale, mustard greens, collard greens, Swiss and rainbow chard, turnip and beet greens, Napa cabbage, bok choy, watercress, arugula, romaine lettuce, microgreens, and spring mix. One serving is 2 cups raw or 1 cup cooked greens.

What is folate? It is a B vitamin that is naturally found in food. Foods high in folate include edamame, lentils, leafy green vegetables, peas, broccoli, asparagus, and black beans. Folate is not made by the body, and it is an essential nutrient that you must get from food sources. It is needed to make DNA and other genetic material and it helps cells divide. Don't be confused by the terms folate and folic acid. They have the same effects. Folate is the natural version found in foods, while folic acid is the man-made version found in supplements and added to foods. Both play an important role in health, but you cannot

eat too much folate from food sources, so it's healthy to "veg up!"

Vitamin E is a nutrient that is important to vision, reproduction, health of your blood and skin, and especially brain health. This nutrient has strong antioxidant properties, which means it protects your cells against damage by free radicals. These are molecules produced when your body breaks down food or is exposed to tobacco smoke and radiation. Foods rich in fat-soluble vitamin E include canola and olive oil, leafy greens, almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds, wheat germ, avocados, salmon, and red bell peppers. When nutrition professionals talk about healthy fats, vitamin E is front and center.

Lutein and beta carotene are powerful antioxidants as well. These nutrients are often associated with eye health and vision. They also support brain health, and sources include yellow, orange, and green leafy fruits and vegetables.

There are so many ways to enjoy leafy green vegetables! Use your creativity and change it up with fruits, nuts, fresh herbs, other veggies (including leftover roasted veggies,) a bit of cheese, and a light salad dressing.

Don't Skip This!

Getting your body ready for exercise, and cooling down with stretches afterward, are crucial for keeping your body injury free and to improve flexibility. When pressed for time, however, many people skip this part of a walking or workout routine.

A 5 to 10 minute warm up that includes light activity, such as a slow version of what you do for exercise, such as walking, helps to prepare your mind and body for more vigorous activity. The warm-up increases your body's core and muscle temperature, and it helps make your muscles less tight. During this time your heart rate and respiratory rate increase, and your blood flow increases – again, preparing your body for more vigorous activity. You can include dynamic stretches during a warm-up. These are slow, controlled movements such as arm circles, shoulder rolls, and knee lifts.

Just as important as the warm-up is the cool-down time. For the last 5 to 10 minutes of your walk or workout, slow your pace to allow your breathing to return to normal. This will also help reduce muscle stiffness. After the cool-down, your muscles are ready for stretching.

It is important to stretch when muscles are warmed up, so after exercise is the best time. Static stretching, where you hold a stretch for 15 to 30 seconds, is best. Do upper and lower body stretches and never stretch to the point of pain – just slight discomfort. Stay relaxed as you stretch and breathe in and out slowly. Don't hold your breath. Make sure you stretch both sides of your body equally and don't bounce or jerk while stretching. Stretch every day, if possible, or at least three times per week, and always stretch after walking or exercise.

Go Green Salad

Makes 4 Servings

Ingredients:

6 cups mixed greens with spinach
4 green onions, sliced
¼ cup parsley, chopped
1 cucumber, thinly sliced
½ cup fresh or frozen peas
2 tablespoons shelled sunflower seeds
Optional topping: crumbled or shredded cheese of choice

Dressing:

½ cup olive oil
3 tablespoons vinegar of choice (balsamic, red wine, white wine vinegar)
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon honey
2 medium cloves garlic, minced (optional)
¼ teaspoon salt
Ground pepper, to taste



Directions:

1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Wash greens, onion, and cucumber by gently rubbing under cold running water. Rinse parsley under cold water and dry with paper towels to remove excess moisture. (If using ready to eat bagged greens, you do not need to rinse.)
3. Place all salad ingredients in a large bowl and toss.
4. In a glass jar with lid, combine all the ingredients for the dressing. Close jar with lid and shake to combine. Serve immediately, or store covered in refrigerator. Always shake or whisk dressing before serving. Vinaigrette will keep well for 7 to 10 days in the refrigerator.
5. Serve salad with dressing on the side.

Once you start making homemade vinaigrette, you won't go back to bottled dressing!

Nutrition Information per 1 cup serving of salad: 25 calories; 0 g fat; 4 g carbohydrates; 2 g protein; 2 g fiber; 35 mg sodium; 2 g sugar.

Nutrition Information per 1 tablespoon of dressing: 160 calories; 17 g fat (2.5 g saturated fat); 3 g carbohydrates; 0 g protein, 0 g fiber; 140 mg sodium; 2 g sugar.

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