

A study suggests a diet rich in ultra-processed foods and refined carbohydrates increases the risk of depression and other mental health conditions. The research is in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. A nutritional psychologist and dietitian said there is "a tremendous amount of high-quality data linking food to...worsening mental health outcomes". She advised people to cut the amount of sugary and low-fibre food they eat to lessen the chances of getting mood disorders. She said people should limit sugar, refined grains, ultra-processed foods, and alcohol.

The study urged people to increase their intake of high-fibre and fermented foods. It said a plant-based diet was effective in reducing depression. Such a diet includes "omega-3 fatty acids, colourful plants like berries, extra virgin olive oil, leafy greens, and lean sources of protein". These diets are well known to help with depression and anxiety. Related research from a university in Australia corroborated the dietitian's findings. A researcher said fermented, probiotic foods may influence brain-related biology and lead to more positive moods and enhance learning.

## EXERCISES:

### EX 1. Short-answer Comprehension Questions

1. What kind of foods may increase the risk of depression and other mental health conditions?
2. According to the dietitian, what types of foods should people limit to reduce mood disorders?
3. What kinds of foods does the study recommend increasing in the diet?
4. What type of diet was found to help reduce depression?
5. How might fermented and probiotic foods affect the brain?

## EX 2. Multiple-choice Questions (4 options)

1. Where was the research published?

A. Journal of Health  
Psychology

C. Journal of Mental Health  
Studies

B. Journal of the Academy  
of Nutrition and Dietetics

D. Journal of Global  
Nutrition

2. Which foods were linked to worsening mental health outcomes?

A. Fresh fruits and  
vegetables

C. Ultra-processed foods  
and refined carbohydrates

B. Whole grains and nuts

D. Lean meat and fish

3. What should people reduce according to the dietitian?

A. Fibre and vegetables

C. Protein and dairy  
products

B. Sugar, refined grains,  
ultra-processed foods, and  
alcohol

D. Fruit and nuts

4. Which diet was mentioned as effective in reducing depression?

A. High-protein diet

C. Plant-based diet

B. Low-fat diet

D. Ketogenic diet

5. What benefit may fermented foods provide?

A. Increase blood pressure

C. Influence brain biology  
and improve mood

B. Improve digestion only

D. Reduce sleep time

### EX 3. True/False Statements

1. A diet high in ultra-processed foods may increase the risk of depression.
2. The study recommends eating more sugary and low-fibre foods.
3. A plant-based diet may help reduce depression and anxiety.
4. Foods like berries, olive oil, and leafy greens are part of a healthy diet suggested in the study.
5. Fermented foods may have an effect on the brain and learning.

### EX 4. Gap-filling Summary (5 blanks)

A study found that eating a lot of (1) \_\_\_\_\_ foods and refined carbohydrates may increase the risk of (2) \_\_\_\_\_ and other mental health problems. Experts recommend limiting foods high in (3) \_\_\_\_\_ and increasing the intake of (4) \_\_\_\_\_ and fermented foods. Research also suggests that a (5) \_\_\_\_\_ diet can help reduce depression.