Mind what you eat!

Everyone knows that a healthy diet is good for your body, but it's also good for your mind. Research has shown that the brain and digestive system are closely connected. Eating the right foods can **affect** the way you feel and think. Luckily, you don't have to make many changes to have an impact. Here are a few suggestions – look online for other ideas!

You're feeling stressed or anxious

Foods that are high in magnesium (Mg) make you feel calmer. Dark chocolate is good, but you mustn't eat more than 50g or your blood sugar will **rise** quickly and then fall. This causes low mood! A handful of almonds (around 12) will give you about 20% of your recommended daily intake (RDI) of magnesium. Mangoes are a great fruit for increasing calm. They contain a chemical called linalool that reduces stress. Reducing or cutting out fast food and sugary snacks also helps.

You've got a test or you need to concentrate

Blueberries can help to **boost** your brain function. In one study, students performed tasks 10% faster and more accurately after drinking blueberry juice. In another, researchers found that people were able to do 15% better in memory tests if they could smell rosemary oil when they studied. Remember to drink enough water – around a litre a day. Dehydration can cause low energy and mood changes so it's hard to motivate yourself to study, focus or remember information.

You've got no energy

The body can't get or make energy without B vitamins. Foods with vitamin B include beans and peas, fish and seafood, wholegrains and leafy greens (e.g. spinach). Low blood sugar can make you feel tired and so you must eat regularly to keep your blood sugar level **steady**.
Don't skip meals and choose foods that **release** energy slowly, like proteins, wholegrains or nuts – try 30g of nuts a day.

You want to improve your mood

Serotonin is the 'happiness' hormone, so eat foods that help the body to make it, such as eggs or bananas – studies have shown that just four bananas a week can **cheer** you **up**! Also, make sure you're eating enough protein. The chemicals in protein are essential for the brain to **regulate** your feelings and thoughts. Good sources of protein are fish, eggs and legumes (peas, beans and lentils).

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