

Eating healthy foods may lower depression risk

By Agata Blaszcak Boxe Published September 21, 2015



Following a diet rich in **produce** and low in processed meats even if you don't do it perfectly may be helpful in **preventing** depression, according to a large new study.

To lower the risk of depression, "People can eat everything, but everything in moderation," as long as they try to eat lots of vegetables, fruits, nuts and fish, and **avoid** fast food and processed meats, said study author Almudena Sanchez-Villegas of the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

At the start of the study, researchers asked 15,000 Spanish university graduates who had never had depression what they normally ate. Then they asked them again, 10 years later.

The researchers looked at how closely the participants' everyday diets **adhered to** three healthy diet patterns that involved consuming high amounts of fruits, vegetables, legumes, nuts and fish, and avoiding processed meats. These principles are part of the Mediterranean diet and other healthy diets.

After 8.5 years, 1,550 people in the study reported being diagnosed with depression or using antidepressant drugs.

The researchers found that the people in the study who **stuck to** the healthy patterns to a moderate or a high **extent** had a lower risk of depression

than those who did not follow these diets at all, or who adhered to them to a low degree.

For example, the risk of depression over the study period for the people who moderately adhered to the Mediterranean diet was about 25 to 30 percent lower than for those who did not adhere to the diet at all, or who adhered to it only to a very small extent, the researchers found.

"Even a moderate adherence to these healthy **dietary** patterns was associated with an important reduction in the risk of developing depression," Sanchez-Villegas told Live Science.

Moreover, the researchers saw no extra benefit for depression risk when participants followed the diets very closely, compared with moderate adherence, she said.

The researchers don't know for sure what may explain the link between these dietary patterns and people's risk of depression. **However**, one potential mechanism is that people who follow these patterns may have a lower risk of depression because they get **adequate** levels of some micronutrients, such as B vitamins, folate or zinc all of which are essential to brain health, Sanchez-Villegas said.

Conversely, the people who don't follow these patterns may have a higher risk of depression because of their nutrient deficits, she said.

Sanchez-Villegas' **previous** research, published in 2006 and 2009, also showed a link between following a Mediterranean diet and a lower risk of depression.

The new study was published Sept. 16 in the journal *BMC Medicine*.

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Taken from: FOX NEWS – Health section <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2015/09/21/eating-healthy-foods-may-lower-depression-risk/> Task created and adapted by Karol Adrian Meza

PART I. According to the previous text, answer the following comprehension questions/statements:

1. The statement "People can eat everything, but everything in moderation," can be interpreted in the next way:

- a) Individuals cannot eat everything they want. They have to eat all in moderated portions.
- b) You can eat all you want but in reasonable portions.
- c) You can have a balance between eating all you desire and moderating the junk food you eat.

2. Which of the following foods do not take part of the principles of Mediterranean and other healthy diets?

- a) Processed meats
- b) Nuts and fish
- c) Vegetables and legumes

3. We can interpret the statement "Even a moderate adherence to these healthy dietary patterns was associated with an important reduction in the risk of developing depression," by Mr. Sanchez-Villegas in the following manner:

- a) If you follow the healthy dietary habit patterns in a reasonable way, the possibility of depression may be reduced.
- b) Adhering to healthy dietary habits cannot reduce depression at all.
- c) Depression is associated with unhealthy dietary habits.

4. At the very beginning of the study, researchers interviewed university graduates. How long did it take for them to be part of the study once again?

- a) A decade-long.
- b) A period of 8.5 years.
- c) It is not mentioned.

5. Who's the author of this news article?

- a) Agata Blaszcak Boxe
- b) A person who works for LiveScience
- c) Almudena Sanchez-Villegas

PART II. According to the statements given, complete the chart with the appropriate numbers from the text.

Example:

I. The amount of graduate students that took part of the research study.	a. 14,500 b. 15,000 c. 8,500
II. The years when other people were diagnosed with depression.	a. 10 years b. 10.5 years c. 8.5 years
III. The low percentages of those who adhered to the Mediterranean diet.	a. 25 to 30 b. 30 to 45 c. 20 to 25
IV. The years when Mr. Sanchez-Villegas published his early work.	a. 2006 and 2015 b. 2009 and 2015 c. 2006 and 2009
V. The date when a new study was published on the journal.	a. September 21 b. September 16 c. September 15

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