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

   B. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

   C. Journal of Mental Health Studies

   D. Journal of Global Nutrition

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

   A. Fresh fruits and vegetables

   B. Whole grains and nuts

   C. Ultra-processed foods and refined carbohydrates

   D. Lean meat and fish

3. What should people reduce according to the dietitian?

   A. Fibre and vegetables

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

   C. Protein and dairy products

   D. Fruit and nuts

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

   A. High-protein diet

   B. Low-fat diet

   C. Plant-based diet

   D. Ketogenic diet

5. What benefit may fermented foods provide?

   A. Increase blood pressure

   B. Improve digestion only

   C. Influence brain biology and improve mood

   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.