

Energy to Nourish Your Mind, Body and Soul



Food and Mood

Winter's cold temperatures and short days can leave us feeling sad, irritable, stressed and unmotivated. Research suggests there is a connection between good nutrition and positive mental health. Food can play a role in improving the way we feel. Some tips to consider:

- **Eat regularly.** The brain relies on food as fuel. Skipping meals can cause low blood sugar, which may leave you sluggish, grumpy and unable to concentrate. Enjoy healthy snacks between meals.
- **Enjoy a variety of healthy foods.** The more varied your diet, the more likely you are to get all the nutrients your body needs.
- **Feel full longer by having a protein source such as lean meat, fish, eggs, beans, nuts or seeds at each meal.** Vitamin B12 and tyrosine (a protein building block) in lean meats have been linked to improved mood and memory.
- **Aim to eat fish at least twice a week.** Fatty fish like salmon, trout and mackerel are rich in omega 3 fatty acids. These have been linked to improving symptoms of depression. Fish also contains vitamin D which our bodies cannot produce naturally from the sun in Canada from October to April.
- **Drink enough fluids** and choose water more often. Being dehydrated affects moods and how the brain functions. In large amounts, drinks and food with caffeine like coffee, tea, and energy drinks may change sleep habits, anxiety levels, and blood pressure.
- **Choose more whole grain products, beans, lentils, vegetables and fruit.** These fibre-filled foods will keep you full longer and are important in overall health.

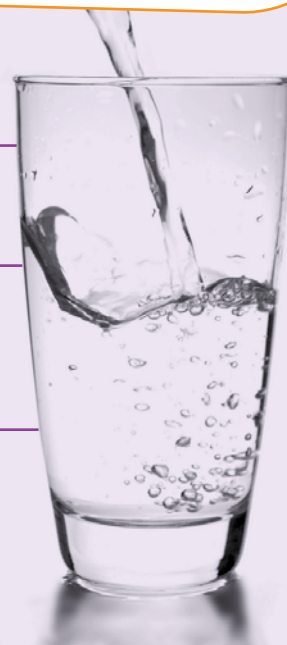


Foods to try

The good stuff

May help if you are experiencing

Vegetables and fruit Beans, lentils and chickpeas Nuts and seeds	Folic acid Magnesium	Anxiety
Whole grains (e.g. oats, brown rice) Lentils, nuts and seeds Vegetables	Vitamin B1	Poor concentration and attention
Whole grains Meats and fish Vegetables Nuts and seeds Milk products	Vitamin B3, Vitamin B6, Vitamin C, folic acid, magnesium, tryptophan, selenium, zinc, omega 3 fats	Depression



Want more information on healthy eating? Visit www.canadafoodguide.org and www.dietitians.ca

By Lana Kusmack, RD, Public Health Dietitian



Lentil Soup

When the weather outside is frightful, comfort foods can be so delightful! Cold temperatures outside make us crave hearty foods that warm us on the inside. Luckily, many comfort foods can be both healthy and tasty. Here's a recipe that is easy to prepare, packed with good nutrition, and inexpensive.

1 cup	dried green or brown lentils	250 ml
1½ Tbsp	canola oil	20 ml
1 clove	garlic, minced	1 clove
½	onion, chopped	½
5 cups	reduced sodium chicken broth	1¼ L
½ tsp	cumin (optional)	2 ml
	salt and pepper to taste	

Nutrients

(per serving - 1 cup or 250 ml)

Calories: 384	Protein: 28.3 g
Carbohydrates: 46.4 g	Fat: 10 g
Fibre: 8.1 g	Iron: 7.4 mg
Calcium: 69.2 mg	Sodium: 293 mg

Pick out the broken lentils. Wash the rest of the lentils under running water, drain and set aside. In a saucepan over medium heat, add the oil and minced garlic and cook for 1 minute. Then add the chopped onions and cook until the onions are clear, about 3 minutes. Add the onion mixture, chicken broth and lentils to a pot. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat to medium. Add the cumin (if using) and simmer on low until the lentils are soft, about 30 minutes to an hour. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Makes 3 servings

Source: *Four Weeks of Healthy Menus, WRHA 2010*



Looking for more easy recipes? Visit: www.wrha.mb.ca/healthinfo/prohealth/nutrition/files/Nutrition_HealthyMenu.pdf