

Does Food Impact My Mental Health?

Yes — not as a cure, and never as a replacement for treatment, but food genuinely moves the needle on mood and energy.

What's well-supported

- **Regular meals.** Blood-sugar crashes feel like anxiety and despair. Eating on a schedule stabilizes more than your stomach.
- **Mediterranean-style eating** — vegetables, fruit, whole grains, fish, olive oil, nuts — is linked to lower depression rates, and trials show improving diet improves mood.
- **Omega-3s** (fatty fish, walnuts, flax) — moderate evidence for mood support.
- **Gut health.** Your gut and brain communicate constantly; fiber, fermented foods, and variety support that system.

What works against you

- **Alcohol** — a depressant that worsens mood, sleep, and suicidal thinking.
- **Heavy caffeine late in the day** — wrecks sleep, and sleep loss amplifies everything.
- **Ultra-processed, high-sugar diets** — linked in large studies to higher depression risk.

Keep it simple

Don't overhaul your life. Add one thing (a piece of fruit, a glass of water, protein at breakfast) rather than banning everything. And if eating itself is a struggle — restriction, bingeing, purging — that's a treatable condition of its own, and worth telling a doctor about directly.

This is general education, not nutrition or medical advice. A doctor or registered dietitian can tailor this to you.

In crisis or struggling? Call or text 988 (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, free, 24/7) · Chat at 988lifeline.org

Beyond September™ is an awareness and education initiative — not a medical, therapy, or crisis service. This guide is general education, not medical advice.

beyondseptember.org · [#beyondseptember](https://twitter.com/beyondseptember)