



## Eat well, feel well

### THE ROLE OF DIET IN MENTAL HEALTH

The body of evidence linking mental health and diet is expanding at a rapid pace. Everything we eat and drink can have a prolonged impact on our thoughts, feelings and behavior regardless of our age, gender or family background. Improving your diet can help give you positive feelings, more energy, calmer moods, clearer thinking and improved sleep.

Diet is a huge factor influencing brain health partially because most of the brain's structure is derived directly from food. Our brains consist of 60% fats and proteins, amino acids, micronutrients and glucose. Each nutrition component has a distinct impact on brain functioning, development, mood and energy.

Omega 3 and 6, are healthy essential fatty acids that cannot be synthesized in the body and must be obtained from the diet. These fats are crucial to the creation and maintenance of brain cell (neuron) membranes and have been linked to preventing degenerative brain conditions. Omega 3 fats (from oily



fish, nuts and seeds) keep neuron membranes fluid for smooth communication between brain cells. Consumption of unhealthy fats, such as trans fats and saturated fats (from deep fried foods and commercially prepared baked goods)

compete with essential fats in the brain and increase the rigidity of neuron membranes, hindering communication between brain cells. Proteins and amino acids manipulate how we feel and behave. Amino acids are the building blocks of neurotransmitters (the chemical messengers in the brain). The complex combinations of compounds in food can stimulate brain cells to produce mind-altering serotonin, dopamine and norepinephrine. Nourishing the brain with the right type of carbohydrates, essential fats, amino acids and micronutrients can regulate neurotransmitter activity, protect the brain from oxidative damage and improve mood.

Nutrition intervention provided by a Registered Dietitian, to individuals with mental health conditions, can lead to improved food intake, positively modified eating behaviors, reduced nutrition related side effects of psychiatric medications, enhanced mood and feelings of well-being.

*Submitted by Rika Mansingh, Registered Dietitian*

Watch Your Diet With

# Rika Mansingh

Registered Dietitian (RD)  
B.S.c. Dietetics (UNP),  
PG.Dip.Diet (UKZN), DCEP (CA)

Provides Dietary Intervention For:

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MAMELE'AWT QWESOME HOUSING SOCIETY



Fuller st. & Old Yale rd., Abbotsford

Time & Date:

**OPEN HOUSE**  
Tuesday, April 25th  
Tuesday, May 23rd  
6 pm - 8 pm

**PANEL DISCUSSION**  
Tuesday, June 13th  
6 pm - 8 pm

Location:

**CLEARBROOK LIBRARY**  
32320 George Ferguson Way,  
Abbotsford

- Meet the team!
- View artist renderings
- Learn about MQHS' 30-year history
- Learn about our designations
- Learn about our intake process
- Share ideas and participate in discussions

# DENTURES?

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