

WORKING ON WELLNESS

A weekly e-newsletter ...

Full of fun exercise tips, nutrition and more!

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WHOLE GRAINS: GOOD MOOD FOOD!

— Excerpt from <https://wholegrainscouncil.org/>

We all know that eating well and taking care of your body can improve your physical health but did you know that it can also improve your mental health?

Studies have shown that diets high in fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts and – you’ve got it – whole grains can help reduce mood swings, anxiety and depression.

Many whole grains are naturally rich in an amino acid called tryptophan, which your body needs to produce serotonin and melatonin. Serotonin, the “feel-good hormone,” improves mood and relaxes brain and body, while melatonin helps establish and maintain steady sleep cycles. It’s easy to see why foods high in tryptophan



may help keep depression at bay and promote healthy sleeping patterns that are very important to mental well being and health.

While many carbohydrates promote serotonin production, eating the right kinds of carbs is important. Whole grains also work to maintain steady blood sugar, which not only keeps you feeling satiated longer but also stabilizes your mood. Do you ever get that “hangry” feeling?

SEE WHOLE GRAINS, NEXT PAGE



HUG SOMEONE YOU LOVE

Close your eyes and think of being with someone who is dear to you. move closer to him/her in your mind and give that person a hug. A bear hug or a gentle one — whatever feels good to you. Feel it in your body.

Your body won’t know the person wasn’t really there, and it will react as if they were. When you feel positively, your body will react accordingly and the symptoms of stress will reduce.



MARCH: WELLNESS/COMPASSION

If you were able to live to the age of 90 and retain either the mind or body of a 30-year-old for the last 60 years of your life, which would you want?

What’s one thing you could do to take better care of yourself?



A list of things to celebrate this week:

MARCH

8

International Women’s Day
National Proofreading Day

9

National Meatball Day



10

National Hug Your Dog Day

11

National Proposal Day

12

National Girl Scout Day

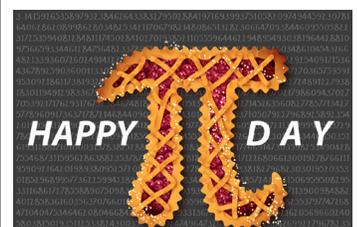
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National K9 Veterans Day

14

Daylight Saving Time Starts

Pi Day



NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH TIPS

—via eatright.org

Week two: Plan your meals each week

- ✓ Use a grocery list to shop for healthful foods
- ✓ Be menu-savvy when dining out
- ✓ Choose healthful recipes to make during the week
- ✓ Enjoy healthful eating at school and at work
- ✓ Plan healthful eating while traveling



WHOLE GRAINS

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You know what I'm talking about: you've skipped breakfast and as your tummy rumbles you also get that super-grumpy feeling, so you reach for the nearest snack. At this point, your blood sugar has dropped and you need something stat! When you choose whole grains, they will refuel your body, stabilizing blood sugar instead of spiking it and then sending it plummeting back down! While eating anything when your blood sugar drops is important, high quality whole grains (no, we're not talking whole grain cookies!) are one of the best options because not only do they trigger serotonin production, they also have beneficial nutrients and fiber. Hanger be gone!

The best part? People who eat healthy whole grains are not only more likely to have an elevated mood but are also more likely to choose healthy foods and exercise, which will make their good mood last.

According to studies done by Arizona State University, diets very low in carbohydrates lead

WHOLE-GRAIN BLUEBERRY MUFFINS — via realsimple.com

Plump blueberries, oats, and whole-wheat flour deliver lots of fiber—meaning, you'll stay full through your morning meetings.

Ingredients

- 1 ¼ cups whole-wheat flour, spooned and leveled*
- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ¼ cup flaxseed meal
- ¼ cup pecans
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp kosher salt
- 1 cup plain low-fat yogurt
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 Tbs unsalted butter, melted
- 1 Tbs grated orange zest, plus ¼ cup orange juice
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 cups fresh blueberries or one 8-ounce bag frozen blueberries

Directions

Heat oven to 375°F. Line a standard 12-cup muffin tin with paper liners. In a food processor, process the flour, oats, flaxseed meal, pecans, baking powder, baking soda, and salt until finely ground.

In a large bowl, whisk together the yogurt, sugar, butter, orange zest and juice, egg and vanilla. Add the flour mixture and mix just until incorporated (do not overmix). Fold in the blueberries.

Divide the batter evenly among the muffin cups. Bake until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 22 to 25 minutes.*Measure the flour by spooning it into a dry measuring cup, then sweep off the excess with a knife.



to fatigue and a reduced desire to exercise – two things that certainly won't boost your mood! As dietitians at the Mayo Clinic point out, being aware of making healthy choices and knowing that you are fueling your body with

healthy foods alone can put you in a better mood.

So whether you're looking to improve your sleep pattern, banish that pesky "hanger," or just stabilize your mood, grab some whole grains and get happy!