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Nutrition, Health, & Well-Being

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You Are What You Eat: Diet, Health, and Well-being

DFEND 2.0
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Objectives

1. Define well-being
2. Understand the impact of social distancing on well-being
3. Understand how well-being is measured
4. Understand how nutrition is linked to well-being
5. Identify nutrients and foods that are linked to well-being
Definition of Well-being

- The presence of positive emotions and moods (e.g., contentment, happiness)
- The absence of negative emotions (e.g., depression, anxiety)
- Satisfaction with life
- Fulfillment and positive functioning

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm

Image: https://studentlife.umich.edu/article/what's-new-your-health-and-well-being
Well-being includes:

- Physical well-being.
- Economic well-being.
- Social well-being.
- Development and activity.
- Emotional well-being.
- Psychological well-being.
- Life satisfaction.
- Domain specific satisfaction.
- Engaging activities and work.
Why Do We Care About Well-being?

• Integrates mental health (mind) and physical health (body) resulting in more holistic approaches to disease prevention and health promotion.

• Positive outcome that is meaningful for people and for many sectors of society, because it tells us that people perceive that their lives are going well.

• Measuring, tracking and promoting well-being can be useful for multiple stakeholders involved in disease prevention and health promotion.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm
Why Do We Care About Well-being?

• Well-being is associated with numerous health-, job-, family-, and economically-related benefits.

• Higher levels of well-being are associated with decreased risk of disease, illness, and injury; better immune functioning; speedier recovery; and increased longevity.

• Individuals with high levels of well-being are more productive at work and are more likely to contribute to their communities

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm
How Does Well-being Relate to Health Promotion?

• Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve their health.

• Health promotion activities aimed at strengthening such individual, environmental and social resources may ultimately improve well-being.
  • Health is more than the absence of disease; it is a resource that allows people to realize their aspirations, satisfy their needs and to cope with the environment in order to live a long, productive, and fruitful life.
  • Health enables social, economic and personal development fundamental to well-being.
  • Environmental and social resources for health can include: peace, economic security, a stable ecosystem, and safe housing.
  • Individual resources for health can include: physical activity, healthful diet, social ties, resiliency, positive emotions, and autonomy.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm
Measuring Well-being

• Because well-being is subjective, it is typically measured with self-reports.
  • Surveys
  • Questionnaires

Eating well (i.e. a well-balanced diet rich in vegetables and nutrients) may be associated with feelings of wellbeing.

- One 2014 study found high levels of wellbeing were reported by individuals who ate more fruit and vegetables.
  - https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/bmjopen/4/9/e005878.full.pdf

- Eating a selection of foods that meet your daily nutritional needs can help you improve your overall health and lead a healthy lifestyle. It can also help people with depression, anxiety, and other related disorders.

- Your gut microbiome may send signals to your brain that can affect mood, thinking skills, and memory.
  - https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/nutritional-psychiatry-your-brain-on-food-201511168626
Evolution of Well-Being and Happiness After Increases in Consumption of Fruit and Vegetables

Redzo Mujcic and Andrew J. Oswald, 2016: *Evolution of Well-Being and Happiness After Increases in Consumption of Fruit and Vegetables*  
American Journal of Public Health **106**, 1504–1510, [https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2016.303260](https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2016.303260)
7 Tips to Manage Mood with Food

1. Eat regularly
2. Stay hydrated
3. Look after your gut
4. Manage caffeine
5. Eat 5 servings of fruit and vegetables per day
6. Get enough protein
7. Eat the right fats

Well-being During COVID-19
Stress During the COVID-19 Pandemic Can Lead to:

• Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones, your financial situation or job, or loss of support services you rely on.
• Changes in sleep or eating patterns.
• Difficulty sleeping or concentrating.
• Worsening of chronic health problems.
• Worsening of mental health conditions.
• Increased use of tobacco, and/or alcohol and other substances.

Social Distancing Recommendations

• Physical distancing (6 feet/2 meters/2 arm lengths) by keeping a safe space between yourself and other people not from your household in both indoor and outdoor spaces.

• Limit contact when running errands.

• Avoid crowds and keep distance at events and social gatherings.

• Stay distanced while being active.

• Wear cloth face coverings

Impact of Social Distancing Recommendations on Health and Well-being

• Social isolation can increase the risk of heart disease, depression, dementia, and even death.

• A 2015 meta-analysis determined that chronic social isolation increases the risk of mortality by 29%.

• Weight gain due to unhealthy eating and physical inactivity.

References


Nutritional Recommendations During COVID-19

• Maintain a healthy lifestyle
  • Get enough sleep
  • Eat well
  • Exercise in your home when you are physically capable of doing so
  • Try to avoid using alcohol or drugs as a way to cope with the stresses of isolation and quarantine
  • If needed, consider telehealth options for psychotherapy.

Nutritional Recommendations During COVID-19

• Proper nutrition and hydration are vital.

• People who eat a well-balanced diet tend to be healthier with stronger immune systems and lower risk of chronic illnesses and infectious diseases.

• So you should eat a variety of fresh and unprocessed foods every day to get the vitamins, minerals, dietary fiber, protein and antioxidants your body needs.

🌟 Drink enough water.

• Avoid sugar, fat and salt to significantly lower your risk of overweight, obesity, heart disease, stroke, diabetes and certain types of cancer.

Impact of COVID-19 on Food Intake for Improved Well-being


• Cravings of comfort foods may increase due to stress and boredom
  • Food cravings: Desire to consume a specific kind of food
    • Emotional: intense desire to eat
    • Behavioral: actively seeking food
    • Cognitive: constant thoughts about food
    • Physiological processes
  • Women tend to have a higher prevalence for food cravings then men

• Carbohydrate cravings
  • Encourage serotonin production which has a positive effect on mood, however avoid simple carbohydrates which can lead to weight gain.
Impact of COVID-19 on Food Intake for Improved Well-being

• Sleep disturbances can increase stress and food intake
  • Consume food containing or promoting the synthesis of serotonin and melatonin at dinner.
    • Roots, leaves, fruits, seeds
    • Protein foods (milk, milk products)

• Consume foods that boost immune function
  • Fruits and vegetables with micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) and antioxidants that boost immunity.
  • Antioxidants increase the number of T-cell subsets
    • Beta Carotene: sweet potatoes, carrots, green leafy vegetables
    • Vitamin C: red peppers, oranges, strawberries, broccoli, mangoes, lemons
    • Vitamin E: vegetable oils, nuts seeds, spinach, broccoli
    • Vitamin D: sun exposure, fish, liver, eggs, foods with added vitamin D
    • Zinc: poultry, red meat, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils

Nutrients 2020, 12(6), 1562; https://doi.org/10.3390/nu12061562
Buy Foods that will Stay Fresh 1 Week or Longer to Minimize Visits to the Supermarket

- **Breads**
- **Grains**
- **Fruits**—sturdy fresh fruit (apples, citrus), dried, plain frozen, canned in juice or water
- **Vegetables**—sturdy fresh veggies (celery, broccoli, onions, potatoes), plain frozen, low sodium canned, sun-dried
- **Sauces**—tomato pasta sauce, salsa
- **Soups & Broths**—canned, frozen, shelf-stable cartons
- **100% Juice**—refrigerated, frozen, canned, boxed
- **Milk**—fresh, canned, shelf-stable packages
- **Eggs**—fresh eggs, egg whites in cartons
- **Cheese**—sliced, cubed, shredded, crumbled, grated hard cheese
- **Beans/Legumes**—canned beans (black beans, chickpeas), dry beans
- **Nuts and seeds**—bagged, canned, nut butters
- **Chicken**—frozen or canned
- **Seafood**—frozen ready-to-cook fish fillets, frozen shrimp, canned tuna, salmon, and sardines
- **Beef**—pre-made frozen lean ground patties or meatballs
- **Flavorings**—add flavor with dried herbs & spices, vinegars, mustard, hot/steak sauces, lemon/lime juice, light dressings, honey, Greek yogurt

Take Home Messages

Eating a selection of foods that meet your daily nutritional needs can help you improve your overall health and well-being.

This includes:

1. Eat regularly
2. Stay hydrated
3. Look after your gut
4. Manage caffeine
5. Eat 5 servings of fruit and vegetables per day
6. Get enough protein
7. Eat the right fats
8. And don’t forget... physical activity!
Questions