



Happy Meals, Happy Thoughts...Happy Holidays!

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We all have our bad or crabby days. Sometimes we can blame our bad mood on the weather, our boss or our relatives during the holidays; other times our bad mood appears from nowhere and for no reason. We're sad, argumentative, impatient or unreasonable. We wonder, "Am I crazy?" Probably not. Usually we are just hungry for the right foods!

Understanding how food nourishes our physical and our emotional body can change our entire life. If you have ever reached for a cup of coffee to keep yourself awake or attentive, you have experienced the food-mood connection firsthand. The foods we consume daily become our blood, our cells, our skin, our organs, and eventually our thoughts and emotions. Eat the right foods and you will nourish your body, fuel your brain,

stabilize your energy, and find your happy balance. Choose the wrong foods or skip a meal altogether and you set yourself up for a life filled with stress, irritability, cravings, moodiness, insomnia and even depression.

Poor diets contribute to many of the mood disorders in our country. Mood disorders affect 19 million Americans and \$20 billion is spent annually on treatment. Most of us know that what we eat today will affect our future health. How you feel now is partially due to what you ate a few hours ago. Neurotransmitters are responsible for this food-mood relationship. They are chemicals in our brains, which facilitate communication between our nerves and stimulate the numerous reactions that govern our bodies. Some of these are Serotonin, neuropeptide, galanin, and endorphins. Foods rich in folate and omega-3 fatty acids also play an important role.

Serotonin regulates several bodily functions and low levels contribute to muscle weakness, sleep disruption, depression and intense carbohydrate cravings. Certain foods rich in tryptophan (eggs, meats, dairy), protein and carbohydrates can all increase the release of serotonin helping us feel better and more relaxed. Not just any old carbohydrate will do the job successfully though. Chocolate, for example, contains an amphetamine-like substance associated with pleasure and love, but may leave you feeling mildly depressed later. Cookies or coffee might give you a quick boost of energy, but can often leave you with a decline in mood and energy.

So next time you are feeling "blah," "spacey" or fatigued, consider what you ate three hours ago. Switch to a wholesome, nourishing diet and experience the difference in your energy, mental clarity, and productivity. Eat well and be well!



Helping clients create a balance and a healthy relationship between food and lifestyle

A customized approach to nutrition

- Private Consultations
- Private and Group Cooking Classes
- Yoga
- Thai Yoga Massage
- Educational Lectures

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