Eat Your Way to Happiness!

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Disclosure
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- Board Member/Advisory Panel
  - Shape Magazine
- Consultant
  - Martek Corporation
- Speaker’s Bureau
  - Leading Authorities
  - Spokespersons Plus
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  - The Watermelon Board
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Objectives

- List 3 neurotransmitters that affect mood and cravings
- Explain the 1, 2, 3 breakfast and why it is important for mood and happiness
- Design nutritious menus that include a 50 to 100 calorie treat of happiness, such as chocolate or candy

It is Very Simple….

- People who eat right are the happiest, healthiest, mentally sharpest & leanest.
- People whose diets consist mainly of unhealthy food choices are most prone to sadness & have the highest rates of depression.
  - The worse the food choices, the worse they feel.
  - When they make changes, they feel better.
  - The more changes made, the better they feel.

What are you willing to tolerate?
Neurotransmitters 101

- Your diet and the blood-brain barrier
  - 40+ Neurotransmitters
  - Serotonin, NPY, Galanin, Endorphins
- They cycle...
  - Throughout the day
  - Throughout the month: PMS
  - Throughout the year: SAD
- Neurotransmitters work in concert

Specific Foods vs The Overall Diet

- Chocolate: The #1 most desired food
  - Cocoa in dark chocolate
  - Flavonoids (procyanidins, flavanols epicatechins & catechins)
  - Potential protection: skin, heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, dementia
  - Effects: nitric oxide stimulation, enhanced blood flow, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant
- Sweets and stress
  - UC San Francisco study: "What was fascinating about these findings was that the rats were less able to cope when they didn't get fat and sugar in their diets"
- The overall diet
  - Choose super-nutritious foods, then sprinkle that diet with a few treats in moderation

The 1-2-3 Breakfast

- Protein/Milk (1 serving)
  - 1 ounce fat-free or low-fat milk
- 1 cup low-fat yogurt
- 1 cup low-fat cottage cheese
- 1 1/2 ounce low-fat cheese
- 1 ounce lean meat
- 1 egg, or 2 egg whites
- 1 1/2 ounces whole wheat bread
- 1 small whole fruit, such as a plum, pear, apple, banana, orange, tangerine, grapefruit, kiwi, cantaloupe/melon
- 1/2 cup fruit canned in its own juice
- 2 Tbsp. or more of dried fruit
- 3 ounces tofu
- 1/4 to 1/2 cup egg substitute

- High-Quality Grains (1-3 servings)
  - 1 cup cooked whole grain rice
  - 1/2 cup cooked whole grain hot cereal (un医治, English, wheat germ)
  - 1 slice whole wheat bread
  - 1/2 slice whole wheat bagel or English muffin
  - 1 small whole wheat pita or flatbread
  - 1 cup cooked whole grain hot cereal

- Fruit (1-2 servings)
  - 1 small piece of whole fruit, such as pears, peaches, plums, apricots, nectarines, peaches, plums, apricots, nectarines, or other fruit
  - 1/2 cup fruit canned in its own juice
  - 1 cup fruit puree
  - 1 fruit bar or 1 apple slice filled

Food & Happiness

- Memories
- Habits
- Emotional connections

Breakfast & Happiness

- The most important meal of the day
  - National Weight Control Registry findings
  - Leaner
  - More nutritious diets
  - Memory, thinking, recall, & problem-solving
  - Intelligence, creativity
  - Energy, less fatigue
  - Happier, calmer, more even mood, less depression

Lunch

- Galanin
  - High-fat: 50% increased calories later in the day
- The two-fer lunch
  - Light
  - Low fat
### Light & Low-Fat Lunches

- Black bean and veggie burrito. Serve with nonfat yogurt and fruit.
- Spinach salad topped with grilled salmon and 2 tablespoons light dressing. Serve with 1 slice sourdough bread, apple, and sparkling water.
- Peanut butter and banana sandwich on whole-wheat bread, with low-fat yogurt or milk.
- Whole-grain bagel topped with low-fat cheese, red onion, tomato – broiled. Serve with watermelon cubes, low-fat milk, and 2 bite-size chocolate pieces.
- Spaghetti squash topped with commercial pasta sauce and 2 tablespoons low-fat Parmesan cheese. Serve with leaf lettuce salad (with light dressing), low-fat milk, and small candy bar.

### Happiness, Caffeine & Sugar

- Caffeine & mood
- Sugar
  - AHA guidelines
  - Your sugar allowance: How do you want to spend it?
  - 50-100 calories of confections
    - 1 fun-size candy bar
    - 3-4 dark chocolate bite-size pieces
    - 2 bite-size peanut butter cups
    - 15-25 small jelly beans
    - 3-5 pieces of hard candy

### Mid-Afternoon: Serotonin

- Pain, sleep, mood, & appetite
  - ↑ tryptophan → ↑ serotonin
  - It’s all carb foods that ↑ serotonin
    - Insulin’s effect on blood amino acid levels
    - 30 grams of carbs = the serotonin effect
  - Why people crave carbs
    - Why low-carb diets won’t work long-term
    - Can’t will-power away these cravings!

### Serotonin-Boosting Snacks

- 1 small apple and 3 graham crackers
- 4 cups air-popped popcorn
- 25 jelly beans
- 5 hard candies
- 3 strings of licorice

### Dinner: Snooze Control

- Fatigue and happiness: Why a good night’s sleep is so important
- Dinner rules
  - Avoid fatty, heavy, spicy, gassy and/or MSG-laden foods
  - Limit alcohol
- 3 tricks to avoid overeating in the evening
  - Chew sugarless gum while cooking
  - Drink a glass of vegetable juice or tomato juice before the meal
  - Include the 3 magic ingredients for weight loss: Fiber, Protein, Water
- The omega-3s and happiness

### The Evening Snack

- Best alternative to a sleeping pill!
- The all-carb evening snack vs a warm cup of milk
- Examples of bedtime snacks
A Day's Menu

- **Breakfast:** Bowl of whole grain cereal with low-fat milk, blueberries and a 6-oz glass of OJ
- **Lunch:** Black bean burrito with spinach salad (light on dressing), glass of low-fat milk, and a piece of fruit.
- **Mid-day Snack:** 3 bite-size chocolate pieces, banana, and water
- **Dinner:** Salmon, steamed veggies, instant brown rice, fruit salad. (Chew gum while preparing.)
- **Evening Snack:** 4 cups air-popped popcorn with dried tart cherries and 1 tablespoon candy-coated chocolate.

If you want additional references for any of the major topics, such as breakfast and mood, why lunch should be low-fat, or omega-3s and mood, either check the references in my book, Food & Mood, or go to my website: www.elizabethsomer.com and request references; several contained on following slides as well

**References**

References


