

# A Community Collaboration Toolkit for Pennsylvania Providers

## Treatment

### Nutrition

Sources: University of Michigan Depression Center, [www.depressioncenter.org](http://www.depressioncenter.org)

#### Healthy Eating

As with many chronic illnesses diet is very important to your wellbeing. Your body needs nutrition to operate well. Overeating and under eating can both stress your body physically. Some people who have depression lose their appetites. No food tastes good. These people may lose significant weight and this can be both unhealthy and dangerous. Other people with depression gain weight. No matter how much they eat, they may never feel full. Overeating can have a negative effect on chronic illnesses such as diabetes and heart disease. Eating a diet high in sugar can negatively affect your mood as well as eating a diet high in fat. Make sure you eat regular meals and avoid caffeinated foods and drinks such as chocolate, coffee and cola. Caffeine often causes people to feel down after the stimulating effect has worn off.

Some antidepressants such as tricyclic antidepressants may cause some people to gain weight. They may stimulate a chemical reaction that produces a craving for sweets. If you are taking one of these medicines, and you find this to be a problem for you, make sure and discuss your concerns with your clinician.

There are many resources available on how to eat nutritiously. Generally the food pyramid is a good overall guide for a healthy balanced diet. This includes servings from each of the food groups. (See diagram) If you have a special diet related to a medical condition then you should follow the diet recommendations from your doctor. **If this is an area you would like more help with, talk with your care manager.**



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# Healing Foods Pyramid™

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## Vitamins and Supplements

If you eat a balanced diet it is likely that you will get the necessary vitamins and minerals your body needs. Generally it is not a bad idea to take a daily multivitamin. You may have heard about using supplements such as Omega-3, B-Vitamins, folate, or Vitamin E. It is important to discuss the use of these supplements with your health care provider as some of them can interact negatively with other medications prescribed to you.

### Omega-3 fatty acids

Essential fatty acids are important in the function of neurotransmitters in the brain, specifically serotonin and dopamine. Studies have shown that having low levels of Omega-3 fatty acids may be associated with depression. Many health care providers are now recommending patients either take an Omega-3 fatty acid supplement or eat foods rich in Omega-3 fatty acids regularly. The typical American diet is high in Omega-6 fatty acids and it is important to get enough of the Omega-3 fatty acids to maintain a healthy balance of both.

Omega-3 fatty acids can be found in cold water fish such as tuna, salmon, lake trout, sardines and mackerel. Omega-6 fatty acids are found in vegetable oils such as corn or soybean. The American Heart Association recommends that patients without coronary heart disease eat two servings of cold water fish a week.

### Folic Acid

There have been reports that low levels of folate have been found in 15-38% of people with depression. Other studies report that those with very low levels of folate respond less effectively to certain antidepressants. Though there needs to be more research on this many health care providers recommend folate supplementation.

### Vitamin B12

B12 has also been associated with depression. B12 helps maintain healthy nerves and red blood cells. B12 deficiency often shows up in people eating a poor diet or those with gastrointestinal conditions that do not allow them to absorb adequate nutrition from the foods they do eat.

## Herbs

### St Johns Wort

St Johns Wort has been suggested to be effective in treating depression. Some people consider this a “natural” medicine for depression. Your provider should know whether you are taking St. Johns Wort because it can interact with other medications you might be taking especially another antidepressant. The production of St Johns Wort is not regulated by the FDA therefore ingredients and purity may vary between different brands.

## Resources

### Individual Help

The Preventive Cardiology Nutrition Program at the University of Michigan Health System offers individualized nutrition counseling appointments as well as a series of interactive small group nutrition workshops. Appointments are available Monday through Friday.

#### Appointment Number:

734-998-7400 or Toll Free 1-888-287-1082

**Clinic location:** Domino's Farms

### MFit Weight Management Program

This unique program combines nutrition, physical activity and health psychology to provide long-term, healthy lifestyle strategies for managing your weight and improving your overall health and well-being. For more information, please call (734) 975-3024, or email [mfit-weight-management@med.umich.edu](mailto:mfit-weight-management@med.umich.edu)

## Classes

### MFit Healthy Cooking Classes

Renowned culinary experts make high fit – low fat cooking and eating tastier, healthier, and easier than ever! Please contact us by phone at (734) 975-3024 or by e-mail at [communitynutrition@med.umich.edu](mailto:communitynutrition@med.umich.edu). All classes are held at the UM Health System's East Ann Arbor Health Center, 4260 Plymouth Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan in the Demonstration Kitchen on Level B1.

## Websites

<http://www.ellynsatter.com/>.

Practical, compassionate advice about feeding kids, from infants through teens; discusses the role of the parent and the role of the child; defines “normal eating”, professional resources; several publications available for sale. Offers workshops targeted to dietitians, but others may attend.

[http://www.thepathway.org/index\\_rev.asp](http://www.thepathway.org/index_rev.asp).

Brief discussions about overweight, depression, overworking, drinking, smoking, and overspending

<http://www.cspinet.org/>

Nutrition Action Healthletter (Center for Science in the Public Interest)

<http://www.mypyramid.gov/>

The Food Pyramid

<http://www.nutrition.gov/>

Various nutrition resources compiled by the National Agricultural Library and the U. S. Department of Agriculture

<http://www.eatright.org/Public/>

American Dietetic Association

<http://www.med.umich.edu/mfit/index.htm>

MFIT: Information on exercise and nutrition through the University of Michigan Health System.

## Books

*The Art and Science of Rational Eating* by Albert Ellis, Michael Abrams, and Lidia Dengelegi.

*The Art of Empowerment: Stories and Strategies for Diabetes Educators* by Bob Anderson and Martha Funnell.

*Eating Disorders: a clinical guide to counseling and treatment* by Monika M. Woolsey.

*Eating Mindfully* by Susan Albers. (Mindfulness meditation as applied to eating.)

*Eating Well, Living Well: When You Can't Diet Anymore* by Glenn A. Gaesser and Karin Kratina.

*Feeding the Body, Nourishing the Soul: Essentials of Eating for Physical, Emotional, and Spiritual Well-Being.* by Debra Kesten

*Food and Mood, 2nd edition: The Complete Guide to Eating Well and Feeling Your Best.* by Elizabeth Somer, Nancy Snyderman.

*Moving Away From Diets.* Karin Kratina, Nancy L. King, and Dayle Hayes

*Overcoming Night Eating Syndrome: a step-by-step guide to breaking the cycle* by Kelly C. Allison, Albert J. Stunkard, with Sara L. Their.

*The Rules of “Normal” Eating* by Karen R. Koenig.

*The 3-Day Solution Plan* by Laurel Mellin

### Disclaimer:

*This written information is not intended as a substitute for medical or mental health care advice. Please be sure to discuss any questions or concerns you may have with a professional person. ■*