

H.R. Mental Wellness

A life-long process of making choices that lead to personal growth and will help you reach your potential and live your life to its fullest.

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H.R. Mental Wellness Centre

Mental Wellness Month

Since 1949, the month of May has been celebrated as the "Mental Health Month" to raise awareness of mental health conditions and offers help to address them.

Mental health is defined as the absence of a major mental-health condition, as described in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM). Accordingly, mental health is a static state of being—you are either mentally healthy or mentally ill. Mental health focuses on ridding the patient of symptoms of mental illness. Individuals are deemed mentally healthy if they are not suffering from psychological dysfunction

or impairment, such as anxiety or depression. If you do not have symptoms that meet the diagnostic criteria, you are deemed mentally healthy. However, freedom of symptoms does not mean that you are mentally well or your mind is functioning as well as it could be.

On the other hand, mental wellness is an active life-long process of making choices that will guide you to reach your potential and live life to its fullest. It goes beyond the concept of mental health and shifts the focus away from illness and symptoms to a holistic approach that emphasizes a view of the entire being and the ability to reach the

peak of psychological health □ □ self-actualization.

The focus on mental health to just treat the symptoms of mental illness has proven to be unsuccessful in ridding the society of mental illness. Indeed, studies show that mental illness has been on the rise. Severe depression is ten times more prevalent today than it was 50 years ago, and now it strikes a full decade earlier in life on average than it did a generation ago. Consequently, the economic cost of mental illness has been escalating.

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Meditation vs. Antidepressants

Utilizing meditation with Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) provides the equivalent protection against depressive relapses as traditional antidepressant medication, according to a new study from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH).

MBCT is a non-pharmacological approach that teaches skills in emotion regulation so patients can monitor possible relapse triggers as well as adopt lifestyle changes conducive to sustaining

mood balance.

The study showed that there were no significant differences in relapse rates between patients in the MBCT group and patients receiving antidepressants.

"The real world implications of these findings bear directly on the front line treatment of depression. For that sizeable group of patients who are unwilling or unable to tolerate antidepressant treatment, MBCT offers equal protection from relapse," said Dr. Zindel Segal, Head of the Cognitive Behaviour

Therapy Clinic in the Clinical Research Department at CAMH. "Sequential intervention—offering pharmacological and psychological interventions—may keep more patients in treatment and thereby reduce the high risk of recurrence that is characteristic of this disorder."

Source: www.camh.net

Mental Wellness Month continued...

In Canada and the USA, the annual economic cost of mental illness is estimated to be more than \$33 billion and \$318 billion, respectively, with the single biggest factor being depression. In 2005, there were an estimated 24.9 million adults aged 18 or older in the USA with serious psychological disorders. This represents 11.3 percent of all adults in the country.

Since January 2006, H.R. Mental Wellness Centre has been established to promote mental wellness for all-- whether you are seeking to heal from depression and anxiety or you are pursuing self-actualization to become the best you.

Mental wellness is our way to well-being. It is better for us to pursue mental wellness as individuals or as a commu-

nity. When we become our best, we have a healthier, happier society. Most importantly, the pursuit of mental wellness unites us as a community with a well defined goal, without discrimination between who is mentally healthy or mentally ill. It is time to change the month from "Mental Health Month" to "Mental Wellness Month."

Source: Dr. Hamdy El-Rayes

Bad Fats Linked to Depression

Consuming trans-fats and saturated fats increase the risk of suffering depression, whilst olive oil on the other hand, protects against this mental illness, according to research conducted by Navarra and Las Palmas de Gran Canaria universities.

The research used 12,059 volunteers that did not suffer from depression before the study and at the end of the study 657 new cases of depression had formed. Of these 657 cases, the participants with an elevated consumption of trans-fats (fats present in artificial form in industrially-produced pastries and fast food, and naturally present in certain whole milk products) "presented up to a 48% increase in the risk of depression when they were

compared to participants who did not consume these fats," affirmed Almudena Sánchez-Villegas, Associate Professor of Preventive Medicine at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria.

In addition, it was found that the more trans-fats were consumed, the greater the harmful effects.

Furthermore, the influence of polyunsaturated fats (abundant in fish and vegetable oils) and of olive oil was associated with a lower risk of suffering depression.

Today some 150 million people are affected by depression worldwide. This is due, according to Almudena Sánchez Villegas, "to radical changes in the sources of fats consumed in Western

diets, where we have substituted certain types of beneficial fats—polyunsaturated and monounsaturated in nuts, vegetable oils and fish—for the saturated and trans-fats found in meats, butter and other products such as mass-produced pastries and fast food".

Finally, the research suggests that depression as well as cardiovascular disease are influenced in a similar manner by diet, and might share similar mechanisms in their origin. Therefore consuming foods that contain trans-fats and saturated fats regularly can lead to a greater risk of not only depression, but cardiovascular disease as well.

Source: Dietary Fat Intake and the Risk of Depression: The SUN Project.

Stress-Busting Chocolate

Eating about an ounce and a half (40 grams) of dark chocolate a day for two weeks reduces levels of stress hormones in the bodies of people feeling highly stressed, according to a recent clinical trial. It was also found that chocolate partially corrected other stress-related

biochemical imbalances. Until now there was little evidence from research in humans and how chocolate might affect stress.

Scientific evidence suggests that antioxidants and other beneficial substances in dark chocolate may reduce risk

factors for heart disease and other physical conditions. Studies also suggest that chocolate may ease emotional stress.

Source: American Chemical Society (ACS)



Alcohol and Caffeine, A Dangerous Brew

What happens when you take alcohol, one of the world's most consumed intoxicants, and add a jolt of caffeine to create a new product?

You get a dangerous brew that “may lead to hazardous and life-threatening behaviours.” according to a consumer update by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

So why is it so bad?

Caffeine can mask sensory cues that people rely on to determine how intoxicated they are. When cues are removed people may become more intoxicated than they realize. As blood alcohol content levels rise (because caffeine in alcohol does nothing to reduce blood alcohol content levels), so do the risks

associated with drinking alcohol. Incoherent decision making and “losing control” can lead to negative behaviours and outcomes such as alcohol poisoning, sexual assault, violence, and traffic accidents.

Source: FDA Consumer Updates

“Caffeine can mask sensory cues that people rely on to determine how intoxicated they are.”

Achieving Nutritional Value Through Your Grocery Shopping

The value of food cannot be judged solely by its price tag. But in today's tough economic climate, choosing foods without considering price is just not feasible for most people. This article will summarize the do's and don'ts when it comes to grocery shopping and seeking nutritional value.

Processed Foods

In general, processed foods are not good value for money because they consist mainly of fillers and additives, and very few actual nutrients. This includes virtually all breakfast cereals as they contain large amounts of sugar and synthetic additives.

Organic Living for the Budget Conscious

12 foods ranked as the most pesticide-free produce, even when conventionally-grown, are onions, pineapple, asparagus, eggplant, avocados, mango, kiwi fruit, cantaloupe, watermelon, frozen sweet peas, and cabbage. So if you can't afford to buy all organic produce, these are the better foods to buy non-organic.

The foods you do want to buy organic are foods that

have permeable or edible skins, and/or that are conventionally grown with higher amounts of pesticides. These include grapes, cherries, nectarines, strawberries, potatoes, spinach, blueberries, peaches, kale/ collard greens, sweet bell peppers, apples, and celery.

You might also want to reconsider buying organic milk. Organic milk (unless raw) is still pasteurized, a process that destroys vital nutrients. Therefore buying organic milk can be an added expense the budget conscious might want to avoid.

Meat and Fish

As swordfish has high levels of mercury, children and pregnant women are advised not to have it at all, so it's best to stay away. Farmed fish are crammed into pens and fed soy, GM corn, antibiotics, poultry litter, and hydrolyzed chicken feathers. As a result, farmed fish can be lower in vitamins and higher in contaminants.

Organic, grass-fed beef is always the best option. Conventionally-raised beef are fed grains and not grass as nature intended and have large amounts of pesticides. Organically-raised grass-fed

beef is higher in beta-carotene, vitamin E, omega-3s, conjugated linoleic acid (CLA), calcium, magnesium, and potassium.

If you have to choose between buying organic beef or organic produce—get the organic beef. It is the best value for money in terms of health benefits.

Quick Examples of High-Value Foods

Fermented foods such as kefir, natto, kimchee, miso, tempeh, pickles, sauerkraut, and olives—great for strengthening your immune system.

Organic coconut oil—great for thyroids and your metabolism

Broccoli—contains Isothiocyanates, a cancer-fighting compound

Grass-fed beef—contains Vitamins A, B12 and E, omega-3 fats, beta carotene, zinc and the potent immune system enhancer CLA

Source: Dr. Mercola



“Organic, grass-fed beef is always the best option.”

H.R. Mental Wellness Centre

Finding your own way to healing from depression, anxiety and addictions.

The H.R. Mental Wellness Centre was established by the El-Rayes Foundation to help you heal from depression, anxiety, and addiction, enjoy your life to the fullest, become more successful in your career and personal relationships, and share your gifts with the world. The Centre promotes a holistic approach to healing that addresses the whole person: body, mind, and spirit. The program uses an integrated approach including mindfulness, principles of Cognitive Behavior Therapy (BCT), Logotherapy, and spirituality. Membership at the Centre is free of charge.



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Joke of the Day



If you can't afford a doctor,
go to an airport - you'll get a
free x-ray and a breast exam,
and; if you mention Al Qaeda,
you'll get a free colonoscopy.