Here’s a happy morsel of news. A healthy meal can lift your mood. It’s true. The foods you eat can affect your mood in a number of ways. Certain foods can put you in a good mood, and even enhance alertness and concentration.¹

Here’s how it works: When you put food into your body, powerful chemicals in your brain are released. Some of these brain chemicals (also called neurotransmitters) are related to food and appetite.

**Which foods can boost your mood?**

**Good carbs = good mood.** Carbohydrate-rich foods help your brain produce the neurotransmitter serotonin. Serotonin can have a calming effect. You might get a quick “high” from foods with simple sugars or processed carbohydrates (white bread, white sugar, etc.). But this surge is short-lived. Reach for fruits, veggies and foods containing whole grains. These foods are filling and high in fiber, so their mood-enhancing effects last longer.

Good carbs: whole grains, beans, leafy greens, squash, apples, pears, berries

**Protein power = enhanced energy and alertness.** Helpful chemicals are released in your brain after eating protein. Lean protein helps you feel full, and it stays in your system longer than processed foods loaded with simple sugars. Protein can keep you alert and provide that steady dose of energy your body needs.

Lean protein: chicken, fish, seafood, eggs, yogurt, soy, chickpeas, almonds

**Vitamins and minerals = fuel for great minds.** There’s a B vitamin called choline that may help with memory, learning and mood. Other vitamins and minerals may help fight symptoms of depression.

Choline: wheat germ and eggs

Folate: spinach, turnip greens, kale, citrus, dried beans or peas, asparagus, tomatoes

Omega-3: wild salmon, tuna, flaxseed oil, canola oil, olive oil

**Eat wisely, be happy.** The benefits of a well-balanced diet are plentiful. Adding healthy, mood-enhancing foods to your menu can make you feel happier, too.

Source:

¹ [http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/Nutrition/hic_What_We_Eat_Affects_How_We_Feel.aspx](http://my.clevelandclinic.org/healthy_living/Nutrition/hic_What_We_Eat_Affects_How_We_Feel.aspx)