

THE BODY + MIND

A Supportive Relationship



The body and mind are **'best friends forever.'** Yes, its functions work in unison together. Today, many people are **investing time and money** into their well-being. Find out if your wellness practices support **a healthy relationship between your body and mind.**

Many factors affect your well-being and sometimes it becomes a question of, 'what came first? The chicken or the egg?' Your thoughts, feelings, beliefs and attitudes can affect your body's physiological and biological functions. However, what you eat, how much you move, how often you stretch and how many hours of sleep you get can affect your thoughts and your mood. You may find yourself asking how this exactly works.

THE GUT-BRAIN AXIS

Emotions adjust both your mental and bodily states. We are constantly being prepared to react to dangers and opportunities. There are many types of research that support a

correlation between the gut and brain. *The Journal of Australian Traditional-Medicine Society* (2019) states, 'the intestinal microbiota influences that brain mainly through the vagus nerve by the neural and humeral means of the gut-brain axis.*

Physical symptoms that your gut-brain axis may be compromised are: abdominal cramps, loose stools, headaches and fatigue.

Your gut bacteria which weighs 1-2 kgs make up your microbiome and it helps to digest food, regulate your immune system and your moods. By supporting a healthy gut, you can reduce your levels of depression and anxiety. You can do this by incorporating probiotic rich foods into your diet such

as kimchi, yogurt, kefir, roots vegetables and apple cider vinegar.

A MOOD BOOSTING DIET

Serotonin is a 'happy hormone.' It's responsible for elevating your mood and 90-95% of it is produced in your gut. A diet mainly consisting of sugar, high fat and fried foods can negatively affect your moods. Eating every 2-3 hours can reduce your cravings for such foods and help you maintain healthy insulin levels. Studies reveal that a mediterranean style diet is rich in anti-oxidants and it promotes good health by lowering coronary and chronic diseases because it is low on saturated fat:

- **Abundant in plant based foods:** fruits, vegetables, nuts, berries, beans, grains, cereals, potatoes and breads.

THE BODY AND MIND ARE ONE FUNCTIONING UNIT AND THE WAY YOU LIVE YOUR DAILY LIFE INFLUENCES YOU PHYSICALLY AND COGNITIVELY

- **Dairy, eggs and fats** - cheeses, yogurts and olive oils are eaten in moderation.
- **Fish and poultry** consumed in low to moderate amounts.
- **Red meats, wine and alcohol** - eaten in low amounts and wine is usually consumed with meals.

KEEP CALM AND MOVE ON

A healthy amount of movement in the form of: exercise, walking and stretching keeps your body in a calm and relaxed state because it releases endorphins which is another happy hormone and it aids with relaxing your muscles and relieving your body of tension. All forms of exercise reveal positive impacts to both your body and mind; specifically exercise in the form of strength training, cycling, running, swimming and other aerobic activities. Exercising three to five times a week for forty-five minutes is ideal for optimal body-mind health as it promotes a healthy heart and strong muscles.

SLEEP TO RESET YOUR BODY AND MIND

Ghrelin and leptin are hormones that influence hunger and appetite. Ghrelin is produced and secreted by the stomach - it is the hunger hormone. Leptin is produced in adipose tissues (fat cells). Leptin tells the brain when you are full and have enough fat for energy. Both these hormones get secreted into the

circulatory system into the brain and send signals to the hypothalamus (a small almond size part of the brain that controls when and how much you eat).

Studies point out that a reduction in sleep leads to abnormalities in the processing of blood sugar because your body's hormones do not get enough rest to reset itself which leads to increase in hunger and appetite. A lack of sleep is also associated with a high calorie diet.

Both ghrelin and leptin help with metabolism and maintain homeostasis within your body.

THE LYMPHATIC SYSTEM AND THE BENEFITS OF MASSAGE

The lymphatic system has two main functions: to drain lymph fluid formed in the tissues and to produce lymphocytes which help the body fight off illness.

The lymphatic system is comprised up of a network of vessels throughout the body that works to remove waste such as: fats, proteins, sugars, hormones and toxins from every cell.

If lymph vessels become stagnant it can lead to fatigue, inflammation, bloating, water retention, weight gain and illness.

Rhythmical compression from massages creates natural movement for lymph to flow removing wastes from body tissue.



ARE YOU FALLING SHORT WITH MANY OF THESE DAILY WELLNESS PRACTICES? IF YOU ARE, YOUR BODY AND MIND MAY NEED TO BE BROUGHT INTO ALIGNMENT

- Eating every couple of hours to ensure that your insulin levels are stable
- Eating well balanced meals with a reasonable amount of macronutrients: protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats
- Eating foods that is rich in anti-oxidants and pre and probiotics
- Exercising/moving regularly
- Sleeping well (6 to 8 hours a night) to reset your hormones
- Stretching and receiving massages to drain wastes and toxins from your body
- Maintaining healthy relationships
- Limiting alcohol
- Keeping hydrated

HERE ARE 10 STRATEGIES TO KEEP YOU MOTIVATED TO STAY WELL

#1 Keep a food diary for 2-3 days and look for unhealthy eating patterns and recognize what times of the day you may be reaching for those sugary treats/junk food. Create a meal plan/daily eating schedule and swap out certain foods with a healthier option

#2 Pick one day out of the week to do all your meal prep. Cut-up your fruits and vegetables, cook your proteins and pack your meals into dishes and glass jars for the week.

#3 Schedule in the time of day you are free to go for a walk or do some exercise. Partner-up with a friend to keep each other accountable.

#4 Create a sleep schedule for yourself.

If you tend to be on your phone at night, lessen the time you spend on your phone each night by five minutes until you train yourself to be completely without it at bedtime. Also, go to bed 15 minutes earlier than the night previous.

#5 Can't get in for a massage? No problem. Invest in a tennis ball or foam roller. Spend 10-15 minutes each day 'rolling.'

#6 Clean-up your contact list. That's right! Make a list of people in your life that support you, make you feel appreciated and uplift you. These people are the ones to keep in touch with. Those that don't quite make the cut could be negatively impacting both your mind and body. Raise your awareness of how some of your relationships may be toxic, and let them go!

#7 Set a reminder on your phone informing you drink a glass of water. Keeping yourself hydrated keeps your blood in circulation and your mind clear and focused

#8 Create a list of your goals and visions. Each time you experience your mind drifting towards negative thoughts - take out your list and get back on-track focusing on your goals.

#9 Eating out? No problem! Don't look at the menu. Request meal with a protein, some grains and veggies

#10 Schedule your day before going to bed. This way you stick to your healthy habits