



HEALTHY TODAY

WINTER COULD BE DRIVING YOU TO DRINK

If it seems like you're more prone to imbibing during the cold, dark winter months, there's some science to back you up.

- ⇒ A new study finally provides some scientific insight into why so many of us drink more than usual during the wintertime, and cold, dark weather could be the culprit. According to research published in the journal *Hepatology*, people who live in the coldest regions of the world actually drink more alcohol during the winter.
- ⇒ The reason people reach for an alcoholic drink more during harsh weather is because alcohol really does makes us feel more comfortable in the cold. Alcohol acts as what scientists call a "vasodilator," or an agent that increases our blood flow to our skin, which makes the body feel warmer. It also means, however, that you are much more likely to consume alcohol in excess during the winter—which can be dangerous for your health.
- ⇒ Sunlight may be the catalyst for binge drinking: fewer hours of sunlight each day are correlated with higher rates of depression, and depression is one of the most apparent risk factors for binge drinking. Being mindful about the weather's influence on your mood can help you identify other ways of coping with seasonal depression—like the foods in your pantry, for example. Turn the page to learn more about healthy foods that can help fight seasonal depression!

<https://www.cookinglight.com/news/why-do-we-drink-more-during-the-winter>

Healthy Today is Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton's informational newsletter on healthy living, created with the goal of helping you and your family stay healthy and thriving every day!

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FOODS TO FIGHT SEASONAL DEPRESSION

Need a natural mood boost this winter? Try turning to some of these foods.

- 1) **Fatty Fish:** DHA and EPA are two omega-3 fatty acids found almost exclusively in fish, and recent research suggests that increasing intake of those two fatty acids can improve symptoms associated with depression. While there's not enough known yet to use them treatment for depression exclusively, the positive effects that EPA and DHA may have on brain health and mood—not to mention heart health—is enough reason to fit fish into your meal rotation at least twice a week if you aren't already. Some plant-based foods like flaxseed, canola oil, and walnuts also contain the omega-3 known as ALA.
- 2) **Vitamin D Rich Foods:** Unique from other vitamins in that it acts as a hormone in the body, Vitamin D plays a role in brain health and neuron functioning, and low levels of vitamin D have been associated with individuals who suffer from depression. The jury is still out as to whether a lack of vitamin D plays a role in helping to cause depression—or if depression causes levels to drop—but there are research studies suggesting that consuming vitamin D may help to prevent depression, as well as ones suggesting it as a treatment. The fact that most individuals get less than the RDA also suggests that it wouldn't hurt to focus more on vitamin D intake, particularly in the winter when there's only a few hours of sunlight.
- 3) **Probiotics:** The gut-brain axis is communication between intestines and the brain via the nervous system, and its role in disease development and progression has become the focus of recent research—including the gut's relationship to depression and anxiety. There's a lot to still be discovered, but a few studies have suggested that repopulating your good gut bacteria may actually be associated with improvements in depression and anxiety.
- 4) **Dark Chocolate:** Flavonoids in the cocoa plant appear to be responsible for increasing blood flow in the brain, as well as having a protective and anti-inflammatory effect on neurons. These mechanisms may offer physiologic benefits, but researchers also think that the simple pleasure of eating chocolate boosts mood. Finding pleasure in a piece of chocolate stimulates areas of the brain that play a role in depression treatment. Choosing darker chocolate with less added sugar is the best choice; limit to around 1-ounce per day or a few times per week, and remember to account for those extra calories.

SEASONAL AFFECTIVE DISORDER

Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is thought to be from changes in brain chemicals triggered by less light and more darkness, and is a real issue affecting around 20 percent of people usually starting in late fall and ending in spring. Light therapy and exercise, as well as prescription medication, are all used to combat SAD, and some diet choices may have subtle effects on depression and mood as well.

French fries may sound good, but eating fried and processed foods, as well as foods made with refined grains and added sugars, may not only hurt your waistline but also your mood. One possible reason behind this is inflammation, something that appears to play a role in most brain-related ailments like dementia and Alzheimer's disease. Those French fries and less healthy foods trigger low-grade inflammation within the body contributing to the development of many chronic diseases, while healthier, less processed foods act as anti-inflammatories in the body. Focus on choosing still in or close to their natural state like vegetables, beans, whole grains, unsaturated oils, nuts, and fish, as well as minimally processed versions like nut butters, canned beans, and frozen unsweetened berries.

TREAT YOURSELF

Allow yourself an indulgence every now and then. A candy bar or handful of potato chips won't derail your heart-healthy diet. But don't let it turn into an excuse for giving up on your healthy-eating plan. If overindulgence is the exception, rather than the rule, you'll balance things out over the long term. What's important is that you eat healthy foods most of the time.

Make sure to check the food labels of cookies, cakes, frostings, crackers and chips. Some of these — even those labeled "reduced fat" — may be made with oils containing trans fats. One clue that a food has some trans fat in it is the phrase "partially hydrogenated" in the ingredient list.

NUTRITION INFORMATION		
Servings per pack: 50		
Serving size: 10g (1 teaspoon)		
	Quantity per serving	Quantity per 100g
Energy	175kJ	1750kJ
Protein	<1g	<1g
Fat, total	4.7g	47.0g
saturated	1.1g	11.0g
polyunsaturated	1.2g	11.6g
monounsaturated	2.4g	24.0g
trans	0.04g	0.4g
Carbohydrate, total	<1g	<1g
sugars	<1g	<1g
Sodium	34mg	340mg

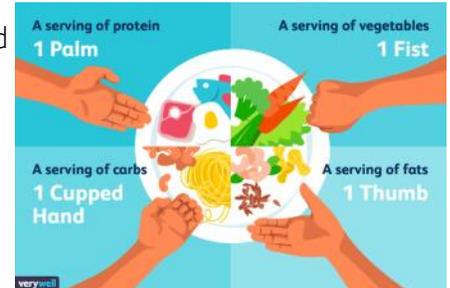
NUTRITION BITES!

STEPS TO PREVENT HEART DISEASE

Are you seeing hearts as Valentine's Day approaches? Here are 8 tips to get you started on a heart healthy diet!

How much you eat is just as important as what you eat

- ⇒ Overloading your plate, taking seconds and eating until you feel stuffed can lead to eating more calories than you should. Portions served in restaurants are often more than anyone needs.
- ⇒ Use a small plate or bowl to help control your portions. Eat larger portions of low-calorie, nutrient-rich foods, such as fruits and vegetables, and smaller portions of high-calorie, high-sodium foods, such as refined, processed or fast foods.
- ⇒ Keep track of the number of servings you eat. The recommended number of servings per food group may vary depending on the specific diet or guidelines you're following. A serving size is a specific amount of food, defined by common measurements such as cups, ounces or pieces. For example, one serving of pasta is about 1/3 to 1/2 cup, or about the size of a hockey puck. A serving of meat, fish or chicken is about 2 to 3 ounces, or about the size and thickness of a deck of cards. Judging serving size is a learned skill. You may need to use measuring cups and spoons or a scale until you're comfortable with your judgment.



Eat More... Vegetables and Fruits!

- ⇒ Vegetables and fruits are good sources of vitamins and minerals. Vegetables and fruits are also low in calories and rich in dietary fiber. Vegetables and fruits, like other plants or plant-based foods, contain substances that may help prevent cardiovascular disease. Eating more fruits and vegetables may help you cut back on higher calorie foods, such as meat, cheese and snack foods.

Fruits and vegetables to choose	Fruits and vegetables to limit
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits • Low-sodium canned vegetables • Canned fruit packed in juice or water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coconut • Vegetables with creamy sauces • Fried or breaded vegetables • Canned fruit packed in heavy syrup • Frozen fruit with sugar added

Limit Unhealthy Fats

- ⇒ Limiting how much saturated and trans fats you eat is an important step to reduce your blood cholesterol and lower your risk of coronary artery disease. A high blood cholesterol level can lead to a buildup of plaques in your arteries, called atherosclerosis, which can increase your risk of heart attack and stroke.

Delicious & Nutritious

SALMON DILL PASTA SALAD

This fresh, citrusy pasta salad features chickpea or whole wheat pasta for a fiber boost!

- 8 ounces chickpea or whole wheat pasta
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest
- 2 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/4 teaspoon black pepper
- 1/3 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1 cup thinly sliced cucumber
- 1 cup frozen green peas, thawed
- 2 (6-oz.) cans skinless, boneless wild sockeye salmon, drained
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh dill



- ⇒ Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt and fat. Drain and rinse with cold water until cool; drain well.
- ⇒ Combine lemon zest, lemon juice, oil, salt, and pepper in a large bowl, stirring with a whisk.
- ⇒ Place onion in a colander or sieve; rinse with cold water. Drain well.
- ⇒ Add pasta, onion, cucumber, peas, salmon, and dill to dressing; toss gently to combine.

<https://www.cookinglight.com/recipes/lemon-dill-salmon-pasta-salad>

Community Health Centers of Greater Dayton

Give us a call to discuss your health with our caring doctors and nurse practitioners!

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Dental Center

East Dayton Dental Center

2132 East Third Street Dayton, OH 45403 Phone and Appointments: 937-528-6830

www.communityhealthdayton.org

Nutritional Information

- Calories 436 •Fat 15g •Satfat 2g
- Unsatisfat 11g •Protein 36g
- Carbohydrate 43g •Fiber 7g
- Sugars 4g •Added sugars 0g
- Sodium 628mg •Calcium 10% DV
- Potassium 8% DV

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