

# Skeltons Chemists

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## Opening Times

Monday to Friday - 8.30am - 5.30pm

Saturday - 8.30am - 3pm

Sundays & Bank Holidays - Closed

## Your FREE Healthy Living Leaflet for February 2022

1. What accounts for the highest burden of global disability?
2. At what age do half of mental illnesses first appear?
3. What does this lead to?
4. What does the latest data from the Global Burden of Disease Study tell us is the leading cause of early death?
5. What have many observational studies across countries, cultures and age groups shown?
6. Does an unhealthy diet during pregnancy affect the unborn child?
7. Does a child's diet in early life affect their mental health?
8. Can a healthy diet prevent depression?
9. Is a healthy diet as good as psychotherapy for reducing the risk of clinical depression in older adults suffering from some depressive symptoms?
10. What is a healthy diet?

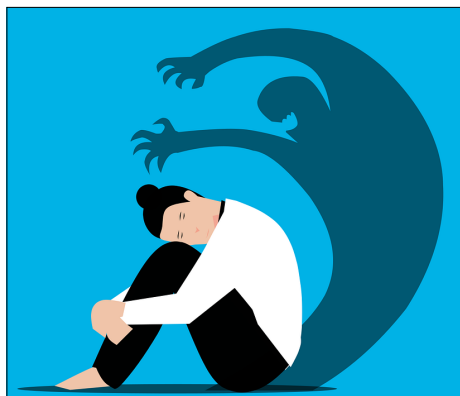


Answers on the bottom of page two

### Rising rates of depression

Mental disorders, especially depression, make up the highest burden of global disability. Half of mental illnesses are apparent before children are 14 and this is linked to long term poor social, criminal and economic outcomes in adulthood.

Despite an increase in the recognition and treatment of depression and anxiety, new data suggest that the rates of depression may be increasing and not decreasing, especially in young people. At the same time the 20<sup>th</sup> century has seen major shifts in diets globally with a marked increase in the amounts of sugars, snacks, takeaways and high energy foods eaten. The latest data from the Global Burden of Disease Study tells us that the



leading cause of early death is now poor diet.

### Linking diet to depression

The study of the effect of diet on mental illness is a new one but there is growing evidence that better quality diets reduce the risk of depression. In the PREDIMED study, scientists were studying whether adopting a Mediterranean style diet would reduce the risk of cardiovascular events in older adults. The results showed that it would. Then, other researchers looked at the depression data from the study and, though the sample size was small, were able to show a strong trend for the prevention of new cases of depression. Similarly, scientists were examining the use of psychotherapy to reduce the risk of clinical depression in older adults and

decided to use dietary counselling as the comparison to the psychotherapy (they were not aware of the studies linking diet and depression).

On average people with raised depressive symptoms are about 4 and a half times more likely to go on to develop full blown clinical depression over a year compared to people without such symptoms. To the researcher's surprise, they found the dietary counselling was just as effective as the psychotherapy at reducing these transition rates (8-9% compared to an expected 20-25%)

### **Pregnancy and poor diet**

Poor diet, those high in processed foods, seem to have an effect right at the start of life. In a study of more than 20,000 mothers, it was shown that the children of mothers who ate an unhealthy diet during pregnancy, had higher levels of behaviours that are linked to mental disorders.

The researchers also saw that the diets of children in their first few years were associated with behavioural markers for mental health. This is consistent with animal experiments where feeding unhealthy diets to pregnant animals resulted in many changes to the brain and behaviour in the offspring. This is very important to understand if we want to prevent mental disorders in the first place.

### **Widespread inflammation**

Researchers now believe that depression is not just a brain disorder but rather a whole-body disorder with dysfunction of the immune system

(long-term, low level inflammation) being a very important risk factor.

Systemic inflammation is a result of the many environmental stressors that are common in our lives - poor diet, lack of exercise, smoking, overweight, lack of sleep, lack



of vitamin D as well as stress. Many of these factors influence our gut microbiota (bugs in the gut), which in turn affects our immune system. If we do not eat enough nutrient dense foods such as fruit, vegetables, whole grains, fish etc this can have a bad effect on our immune

system, gene expression and gut microbiota - these are especially reliant on an adequate intake of fibre.

On the other hand, a diet high in saturated fats and refined sugars has a negative impact on our brain protein, neurotrophins, which protect the brain against

oxidative stress and promote the growth of new brain cells.

### **Healthy diets**

There are various healthy diets but what they all have in common is that they are based

on the diets we ate pre the industrial revolution and consist of fresh, non-processed foods like

plants, whole grains, nuts, fish, lean red meat and healthy fats.



**For more information about this or any other health related problems have a chat with one of our trained staff.**



Answers: Q1, Mental disorders, particularly depression. Q2, Before the age of 14. Q3, Poor social, criminal and economic outcomes. Q4, An unhealthy diet. Q5, Better quality diets reduce the risk of depression. Q6, Yes, 3 large studies have shown that these children had higher levels of behaviour that are linked to mental disorders. Q7, Yes, the research showed a link between diet and mental health. Q8, Yes, the PREDIMED did suggest a Mediterranean diet could prevent new cases of depression, especially in those with diabetes. Q9, Yes dietary counselling was found to be just as effective as psychotherapy. Q10, Plant based foods, whole grains, nuts, fish and lean red meat and healthy fats with no sugary or fatty foods, snacks, junk food, take aways etc.