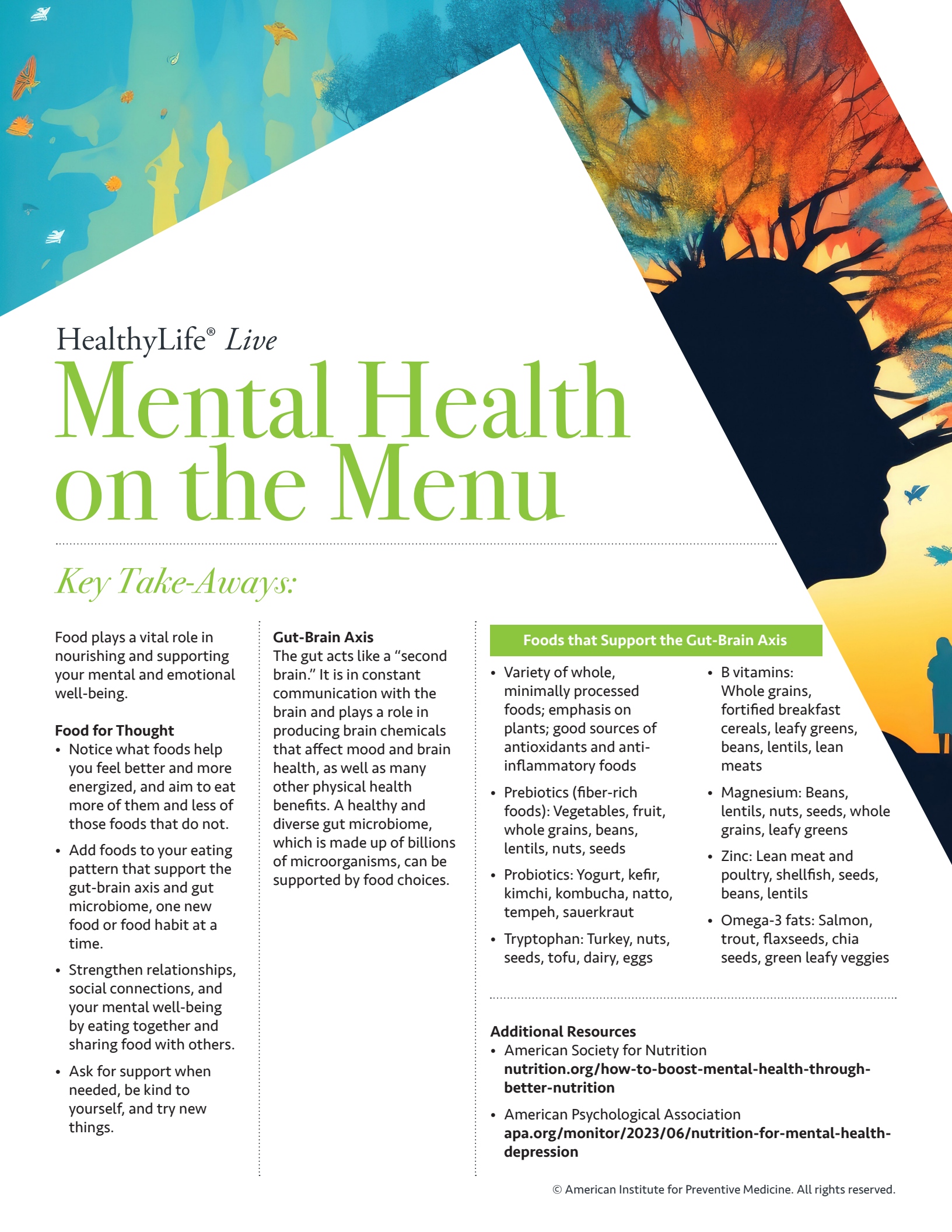




HealthyLife® *Live*

Mental Health on the Menu

Key Take-Aways:

Food plays a vital role in nourishing and supporting your mental and emotional well-being.

Food for Thought

- Notice what foods help you feel better and more energized, and aim to eat more of them and less of those foods that do not.
- Add foods to your eating pattern that support the gut-brain axis and gut microbiome, one new food or food habit at a time.
- Strengthen relationships, social connections, and your mental well-being by eating together and sharing food with others.
- Ask for support when needed, be kind to yourself, and try new things.

Gut-Brain Axis

The gut acts like a “second brain.” It is in constant communication with the brain and plays a role in producing brain chemicals that affect mood and brain health, as well as many other physical health benefits. A healthy and diverse gut microbiome, which is made up of billions of microorganisms, can be supported by food choices.

Foods that Support the Gut-Brain Axis

- Variety of whole, minimally processed foods; emphasis on plants; good sources of antioxidants and anti-inflammatory foods
- Prebiotics (fiber-rich foods): Vegetables, fruit, whole grains, beans, lentils, nuts, seeds
- Probiotics: Yogurt, kefir, kimchi, kombucha, natto, tempeh, sauerkraut
- Tryptophan: Turkey, nuts, seeds, tofu, dairy, eggs
- B vitamins: Whole grains, fortified breakfast cereals, leafy greens, beans, lentils, lean meats
- Magnesium: Beans, lentils, nuts, seeds, whole grains, leafy greens
- Zinc: Lean meat and poultry, shellfish, seeds, beans, lentils
- Omega-3 fats: Salmon, trout, flaxseeds, chia seeds, green leafy veggies

Additional Resources

- American Society for Nutrition
[nutrition.org/how-to-boost-mental-health-through-better-nutrition](https://www.nutrition.org/how-to-boost-mental-health-through-better-nutrition)
- American Psychological Association
[apa.org/monitor/2023/06/nutrition-for-mental-health-depression](https://www.apa.org/monitor/2023/06/nutrition-for-mental-health-depression)