

# Supplementing Diet

## Supplement Starter Snapshot:

- ▲ Methylated B12 and folate, 800 mcg-1,000 mcg, daily
- ▲ Omega 3-fatty acids (EPA and DHA), 1,300 mg, daily
- ▲ Vitamin D3, 5,000 IU, daily
- ▲ Probiotics (*Bifidobacteria* and *Lactobacillus* strains), daily

It can be very difficult to consume the optimal amount of vitamins and minerals our bodies need to function strictly through the foods we eat. This guide will discuss four daily supplements that can be added to your diet to help improve the way you feel. The supplements discussed can have a significant impact on neuroinflammation and neurotransmitter production, leading to increased energy, concentration, and improved mood.

### **Methylated B12 and folate, 800 mcg-1,000 mcg daily**

Methylated B12 and folate are B vitamins that are water-soluble, making them impossible for your body to store. It can be difficult to eat enough B vitamins in even the healthiest diet, as they are naturally only found in animal products. Additionally, some things can work to further deplete the body of B vitamins, like consuming too much sugar, alcohol, or caffeine. As it can be difficult for the body to metabolize vitamin B, this can lead to depression, anxiety, brain fog, and fatigue, and can even result in some antidepressant medication to be ineffective. Taking

methylated B12 and methylated folate, as opposed to non-methylated, allows for a biochemical process to occur in the body in which DNA repair begins and inflammation lowers.

### **Omega 3-fatty acids (EPA and DHA), 1,300 mg, daily**

Taking marine omega-3 fatty acids is critical to mood. EPA and DHA, omega-3 fatty acids found in fatty seafood, lower neuroinflammation, increase serotonin uptake, and can improve cognitive function. In other words, consuming enough EPA and DHA can prevent and treat depression, anxiety, and other mood disorders. Plant-based EPA and DHA supplements are much more difficult for the body to absorb, limiting their effectiveness. To avoid a 'fishy' taste, store these supplements in the freezer and take them frozen.

### **Vitamin D3, 5,000 IU, daily**

Vitamin D comes from both the sun and some of the food we

eat. Living in Canada above the 37th parallel means that we are limited to the amount of sun we are able to absorb naturally throughout the year. Temperatures in the winter months prevent our skin from being exposed to sunlight, as well as sunscreen preventing absorption in the summer months. Very few foods naturally contain vitamin D, and typically the quantities are too low to have a measurable difference. For these reasons, many people are chronically deficient in vitamin D. Vitamin D deficiency has been linked to developing depression, anxiety, sleep disfunction, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and immune issues, as well as worsen mood swings, fatigue, and chronic pain. Vitamin D3 is the most readily available for the body to absorb, and combining it with vitamin K2 helps the body process calcium, allocating it to bones instead of staying the arteries risking blockages. Aim for 5,000 IU of vitamin D3, with vitamin K2, every day.

#### Probiotics (*Bifidobacteria* and *Lactobacillus* strains), daily

The importance of the gut microbiome cannot be overstated. Up to 95% of the serotonin in the body is produced in this microbiome, the neurotransmitter responsible for mood, sleep,

and digestion. Without properly caring for the trillions of microorganisms the gut harbours, the risk of developing depression, anxiety, brain fog, ADHA, sleep disorders, and mood disorders increases. It is important to supplement with probiotics to restore and maintain good gut bacteria, as many aspects of modern life kill this bacteria, including sugar, food chemicals, vegetable oils, refined grains, prescription medication, and air pollution. Those who consume high amounts of probiotics experience such an improvement in mood that it is observable in brain scans. While there are some foods that naturally contain probiotics, like yogurt, it is important to pay attention to whether or not the microorganisms are still alive. Processes like pasteurization kill the good bacteria, as well as artificially high sugar content. The specific probiotic strains that have been shown to positively influence mood are from the *Lactobacillus* and *Bifidobacterium* genus. Additionally, ensure that the supplement you choose is made by a reputable manufacturer, as some companies can be misleading about the number of live strains in their probiotics.

Always speak to your primary healthcare provider with questions or concerns prior to making changes to your lifestyle.

