

March 2021



**March is National Nutrition Month**

# Your Health Matters

Monthly newsletter brought to you by Brieden Consulting Group

## What Impact Does Nutrition have on Mental Health?

Mental health is a trending topic, and for good reason. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, 1 in 5 adults experienced mental illness in 2018, while 16.5% of youth ages 6–17 experienced a mental health disorder in 2016. The most prevalent mental health issues include anxiety, depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder. Experts report that mental disorders are rising globally. As health care professionals and researchers work to understand these conditions and find effective treatments, it is important to explore both the impact of mental health on overall health and the role of healthy eating patterns in the treatment of mental health conditions.

### MENTAL HEALTH IMPACT ON OVERALL HEALTH

Health is broadly defined as “a state of physical, mental and social well-being, in addition to freedom from disease and/or illness.” In other words, health is all-encompassing. It includes daily movement, adequate sleep, a healthy eating pattern and social connections. Foundational habits that promote health contribute to improved quality of life and may reduce risk for chronic diseases.

Physical and mental health are closely linked, and research shows that mental health disorders are associated with the risk, management and progression of diseases such as diabetes, hypertension, stroke, heart disease and cancer. Mental health disorders often precede chronic health issues, while chronic diseases intensify symptoms of mental health disorders. This cycle hinders the treatment of or recovery from either challenge. Addressing mental health should be an important component of disease prevention efforts.

### MENTAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION RESEARCH

Current treatments for mental health disorders and illnesses often include medication, therapy or a combination of the two. These treatments have proven efficacy, yet mental health issues continues to rise globally. Treating mental health challenges may require other, less traditional approaches. One approach that is continually being explored is the role of nutrition in mental health. Western dietary habits, which include heavily processed foods, large quantities of refined grains and soft drinks, and little to no fresh produce, increase the risk of depression and provide fewer physical and mental health benefits.

## About Us

We believe that living a healthy lifestyle is a key component to every day life. We want to be able to provide you with useful updates and alerts to help you maintain good health for your body and mind.

The health plan through Brieden Consulting Group offers great coverage that is affordable to help you maintain your health and the health of your entire family.

Please keep an eye out for the “Your Health Matters” monthly newsletters that will be distributed to all employees.

## Our Contact Info

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Researchers are also studying the efficacy of individual nutrients on the treatment of mental health disorders. Some of the nutrients that are being studied include protein, omega-3 fatty acids, B vitamins, folate, zinc, iron and iodine. While individual treatment with specific macronutrients may be useful in a laboratory setting or under a medical professional's care, most people will benefit from taking a broader approach to nutrition, one that focuses on the quality of food choices and the overall dietary pattern.

## WHAT IS A HEALTHY EATING PATTERN?

The focus of nutrition research is shifting away from nutrients in isolation and toward the unique interactions that occur between nutrients in food. Eating moderate portions of a wide variety of whole, minimally processed foods will provide optimal nutrition and contribute to overall diet satisfaction. A healthy eating pattern should include foods from every food group: dairy, vegetables, fruits, whole grains and protein. Eating healthfully under this broad definition can look different depending on factors such as age, physical activity, health condition, taste preference and cultural variation.

More research is needed on the impact of individual nutrients on mental health disorders, yet it is clear there is a link between low-nutrient, highly processed diets and mental health issues. Early intervention for mental disorders is key, so ensuring children receive nourishing food and are educated about nutrition is more important than ever.

Physical and mental states are closely intertwined, and nutrition plays an important role in maintaining a state of health and wellness. A nourished body and mind will be better equipped to handle life's challenges. .

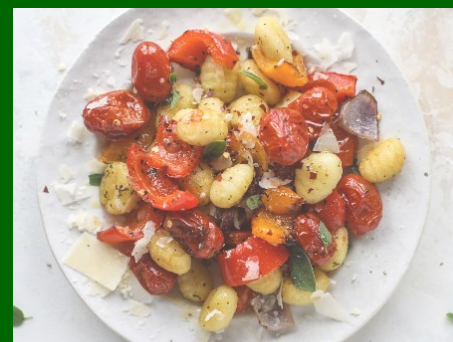
Full article [here](#).

## Recipe of the Month

### SHEET PAN GNOCCHI AND ROASTED VEGGIES

#### INGREDIENTS

- 1 16 ounce package uncooked potato gnocchi
- 1 pint grape tomatoes
- 1 red bell pepper, *chopped*
- 1 orange bell pepper, *chopped*
- ½ red onion, *chopped*
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano
- ½ teaspoon dried basil



#### INSTRUCTIONS

**Preheat over to 425. Line a baking sheet with foil and spray with nonstick spray. Spread the gnocchi, tomatoes, and onions on the sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with spices and toss to combine. Roast for 20 to 25 minutes, tossing once. The tomatoes should be bursting and the peppers soft and caramely. Sprinkle with parmesan cheese and serve immediately. Check the website for how to make it with cauliflower gnocchi!**

Full recipe [here](#).