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## March 2017 (Issue 3) : Fighting Depression with Food

Aga Khan University Hospital, Karachi

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## FIGHTING DEPRESSION WITH FOOD

Recently, University of Columbia in New York City, conducted a research study on the treatment for depression. Clinically depressed patients were divided into 2 groups; the first group received 60 minutes of dietary counselling while the other group received psychotherapy and medications.

The study was called SMILES study (Supporting Modifications of Lifestyles in Lower Emotional States).

### DIETARY COUNSELLING COMPONENTS

The dietary component focussed on improvement in the intake of 12 food groups, including whole grains, seafood, fruits, vegetables, nuts, legumes, poultry and lean meat and a decrease in consumption of empty carbohydrates, refined starches and processed foods.

### RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM DIETARY COUNSELLING

- It was found out that aspects of a patient's nutritional life are traditionally never discussed.
- However, these discussions help build an alliance between caregivers.
- These are an effective intervention and can be fun for patients.
- It is also generally perceived that food that is healthy for the brain is costly. However, upon comparison, it was found that healthy food sources are cheaper than non-healthy ones.

### NUTRIENTS TO FOCUS ON AND FOODS RICH IN THOSE NUTRIENTS

- **Omega 3 Fatty Foods**  
Flax seeds, chia seeds, walnuts, spinach and seafood.

- **Zinc**  
Lean beef and lamb, yoghurt, cashew nuts, chickpeas, cocoa powder, chicken and pumpkin.
- **Magnesium**  
Dark leafy vegetables, nuts, seeds, banana, whole grains and dark chocolate.
- **IRON**  
Lean red meat, liver, green leafy vegetables, nuts, peas, bean and iron-fortified seafood.
- **VITAMIN B12 RICH FOODS**  
Liver, seafood, red meat, cheese, eggs and fortified foods.



References:

[http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/875236?nid=112545\\_1842&src=WNL\\_mdplsfeat\\_170207\\_mscpedit\\_wir&uac=168201SK&spon=17&impID=1286196&faf=1](http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/875236?nid=112545_1842&src=WNL_mdplsfeat_170207_mscpedit_wir&uac=168201SK&spon=17&impID=1286196&faf=1)