



Nutrition for Emotional Health

When we eat food, it does a lot more than fill us up. Food creates memories, associations, forms habits and changes our mood.

Food, our gut health and our emotions are all closely linked

All of this is vital during early childhood when, everything we introduce is new and everything is creating connections. Let's help children to form a healthy emotional balance with food.

Gut Health

Many areas of our health are impacted by the diversity of our gut microbiome. Children need foods which feed this such as pre and probiotics, colourful fruit and veg and 'clean' protein (not ultra processed. Sugar should be avoided in the early years

Gut & Emotions

The food we eat has a direct impact on our mood. Food helps to create neurotransmitters which impact mood. These can make us alert, focused, excited or sleepy. Natural foods create natural mood regulation.

Sleep

The foods we eat can help us feel relaxed and ready for sleep.

Amino Acid Tryptophan (found in milk) converts to serotonin. Serotonin converts to Melatonin (hormone which aids relaxation and sleep)

Sugar

The more sweet foods we are introduced to the more we crave them - this can develop into a 'sweet tooth' There is no nutritional need to introduce sweets, cakes, puddings to any child under the age of 4 whilst their palate and taste preferences are forming.

Immunity & Gut Health

Excessive ultra processed foods and high sugar intake can disrupt gut bacteria balance, potentially leading to digestive issues and weakened immunity.

These foods are also disruptive to other areas of development such as speech & language

Sugar & Brain Activity

This 'sweet tooth' and sugary cravings links to a number of biological factors in our brains.

Sugary foods activate part of our brain that produces Dopamine.

Habits

Introducing a variety of nutrient-dense foods early on promotes a resilient gut microbiome, supporting long-term health and disease preventions.

Avoiding Ultra Processed and sugary foods enables a healthy palate to form.

Dopamine

Dopamine is a key neurotransmitter that plays a central role in motivating behaviour.

So sugary foods promote positive motivational feelings in the brain linked to those foods AND motivates us to repeat behaviours that are associated with pleasure and reward

