

Invited Speaker Abstract

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Title of Presentation

The MoodFOOD project: evidence-based strategies to prevent depression through food

1. Abstract

More than 40 million Europeans experience a major depressive disorder. One in ten men and one in five women suffer from clinical depression at least once during their lifetime. Depression is one of the most prevalent and disabling disorders in the EU.

Given the increasing prevalence of depression, more people are actively searching for ways to decrease their risk through lifestyle modification, but are often overwhelmed by confusing and contradictory information.

Based on a large number of studies conducted in the 5-year MoodFOOD project, including a large prevention trial conducted in four European countries, and after careful review of the current literature, MoodFOOD researchers have developed evidence-based nutritional strategies to help prevent depression. The project concluded that following a healthy dietary pattern consistent with national dietary guidelines may reduce depressive symptoms in the general population; vegetables, fruit and fish are particularly important. Furthermore, the evidence does not support taking nutritional supplements for the prevention of depression. For people with obesity, weight loss can reduce depressive symptoms.

2. key references

Effect of multinutrient supplementation and food-related behavioural activation therapy on prevention of major depressive disorder among overweight or obese adults with subsyndromal depressive symptoms: the MoodFOOD randomized clinical trial. Bot M, Brouwer IA, Roca M, Kohls E, Penninx BWJH, Watkins E, van Grootheest G, Cabout M, Hegerl U, Gili M, Owens M, Visser M. JAMA. 2019 Mar 5;321(9):858-868.

Diet quality and depression risk: A systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis of prospective studies. Molendijk M, Molero P, Ortuño Sánchez-Pedreño F, Van der Does W, Angel Martínez-González M. J Affect Disord. 2018 Jan 15;226:346-354.

3. key messages

- A healthy dietary pattern, according to national dietary guidelines, may reduce the risk of developing a depression.
- In people with obesity, weight loss can lead to a reduction in depressive symptoms.
- Current evidence does not support the use of nutritional supplements in order to prevent depression.