

# Wellness At Work - Simple Habits For A Happy Workplace

## May 2016 - Change Your Diet, Change Your Life

I'm sure you've heard the saying 'you are what you eat.' Think about it, every single morsel or drop that you imbibe is processed by your body and used to create your cells. You may have also heard the saying 'rubbish in, rubbish out.' The truth is that changing your diet for the better, will most definitely change your life for the better too. Ultimately, eating isn't just about satisfying hunger, it is about creating an environment where your body functions at its inherent optimal metabolic performance capabilities. How and what you eat will determine your mental, physical and emotional wellbeing throughout the day. If you haven't yet heard the news on the street about saying goodbye to sugar, coffee, alcohol and processed foods, below is a baseline you want to set for yourself.



**Diet fundamentals:** At the very least, your diet should consist mainly of lean protein, fruits, vegetables, and complex carbohydrates; no processed foods; and minimal / no white flour and processed sugar just to keep your body and mind in balance. However, consider that when you spend all day confronting challenging mental tasks, the brain's nutritional demands are greater. Taking the time to research and understand how your body works, including what hinders and what helps you maintain nutritional requirements for optimal brain function, really should be on your list of things to do.



**Diet and mental health:** Research now suggests that depression and dementia are affected by the quality of your diet across the span of your life. Studies also show that people who eat more unhealthy and junk oriented foods are at increased risk of depression. Without the foundation of a good diet, you will find it very difficult to correct mental health issues and feel good in your own skin.



**Alcohol is not your friend:** It's widely known that alcohol is harmful to your liver, but it imparts its damage not only by damaging liver cells directly. Another reason why alcohol causes liver disease has to do with disruptions to gut microbiota. A series of recent experiments showed that alcohol downregulates two genes that produce antimicrobial molecules that have broad-spectrum activity against beneficial bacteria. If your gut is your second brain then drinking alcohol becomes a game of double jeopardy - bad for the brain in your gut and the one in your head!



**Quit caffeine as your drug of choice:** coffee depletes serotonin, which contributes to a sense of well-being. Also, if you have it on an empty stomach, that quick delivery to the bloodstream leads to more anxiety and stress. If you want to use coffee intelligently, save it for your midafternoon treat after food, when your hormonal and neural connections often need the boost.



**Sugar is like a junk bond for your body:** Whilst everything in moderation is a great motto to live by, very few people are able to self-regulate their sugar intake. Add to that, the fact that sugar is present in the majority of processed foods and the challenge increases. The list of proven negative impacts created by sugar consumption continues to grow; decreased immunity and increased risk of diabetes, to damaging your liver, kidneys and cardiovascular system. No good will come of your daily sugar fixes and your body will thank you for minimising or eradicating your intake of processed sugar.



Of course, everyone's dietary needs are unique, and giving yourself a treat once in a while encourages you to stick to a good diet for the long term. If you would like to learn more about the fundamentals of re-building yourself at the cellular level through diet, take a look at [You Are What You Eat: The Plan That Will Change Your Life](#).

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