



Nourishing the Mind: The Role of Food & Plants in Mental Wellness

Shelby Thompson, LCSW, BHA II
Chugachmiut

The background of the entire page is decorated with various slices of kiwi fruit and whole blueberries. The kiwi slices are arranged in a circular pattern around the central text, with some slices overlapping. The blueberries are scattered throughout, including one prominently in the center-left and another in the bottom center.

Table of Contents

1.

Gut-Brain Axis

Food doesn't just fill you up—it helps control your mood, energy, and mental health.

2.

Addiction

How does your plate affect your recovery?

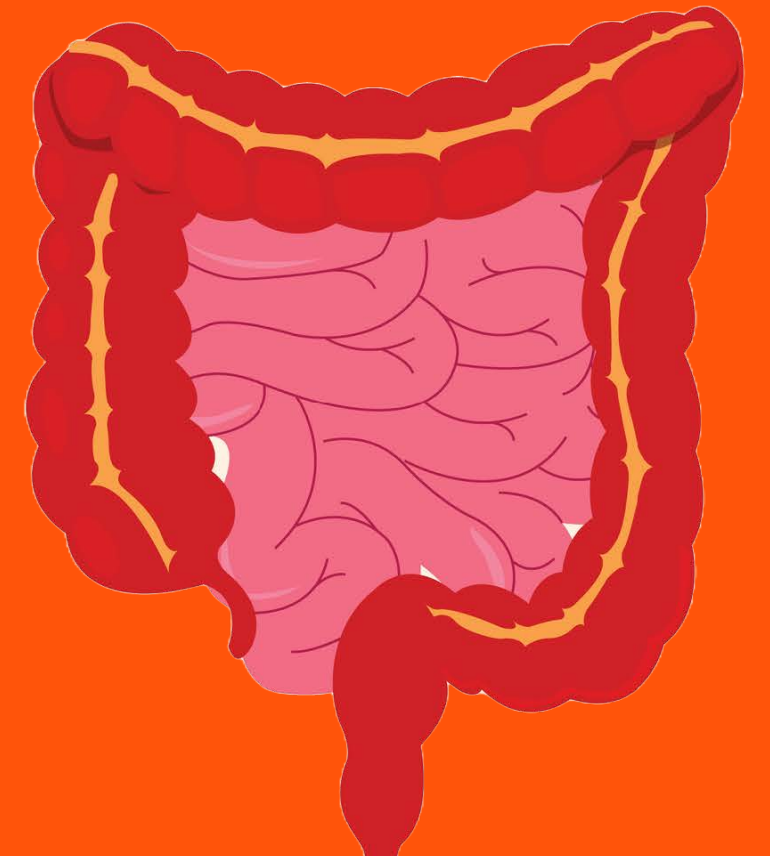
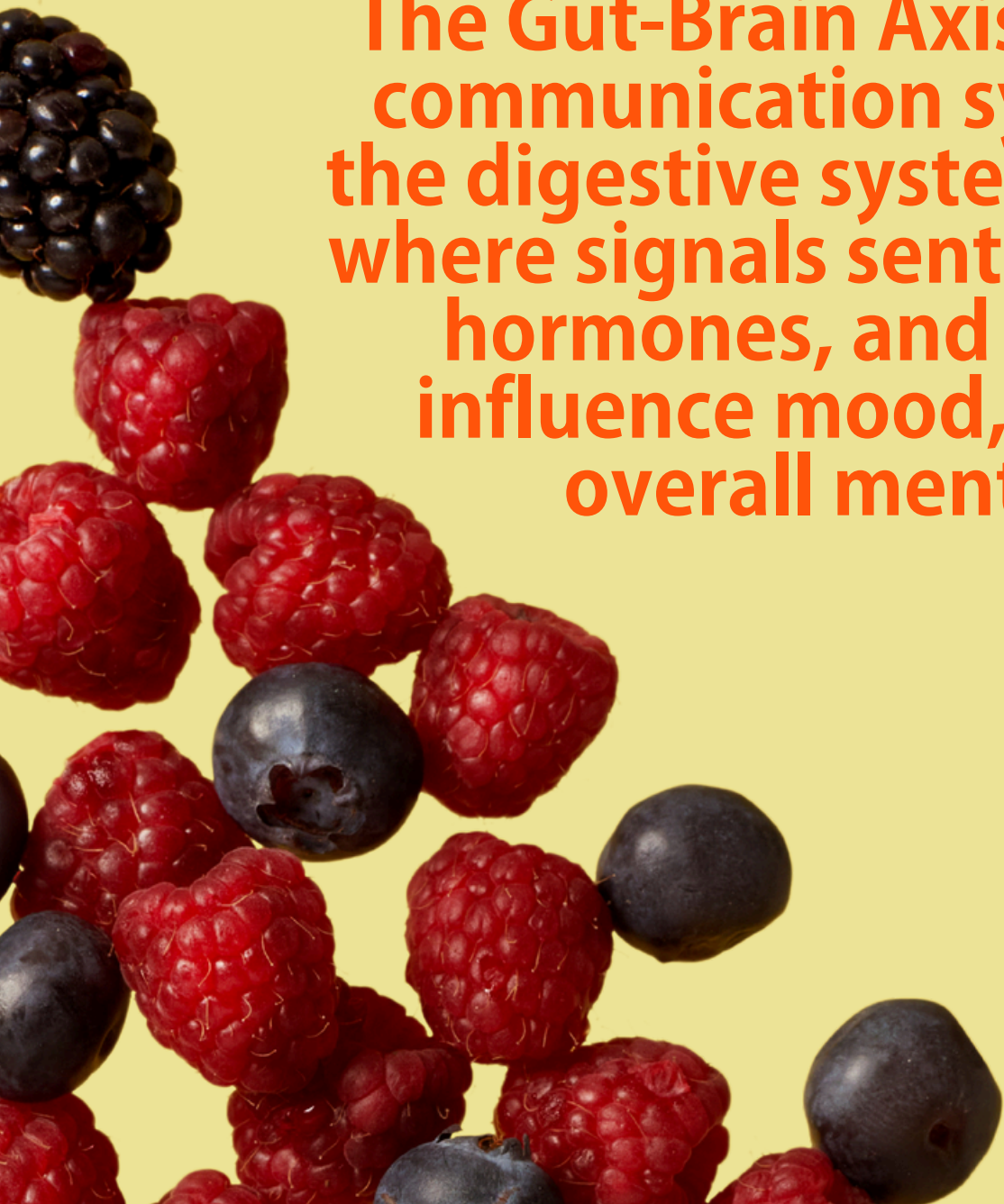
3.

Traditional Food & Plants

Food is more than just nutrition.

Gut-Brain Axis

The Gut-Brain Axis is the two-way communication system between the digestive system and the brain, where signals sent through nerves, hormones, and gut microbes influence mood, thinking, and overall mental health.



Traumatic Brain Injury

Also called a TBI. Occurs when brain function is altered by an external force. This includes Concussions.

Examples: Assault, Fall, Blast Exposure, Sports Collision, Motor Vehicle Accident



Acquired Brain Injury

Non-traumatic brain injury (also commonly referred to as an acquired brain injury) causes damage to the brain as a result of internal factors.

Examples: Lack of oxygen, Exposure to toxins, Disruption of blood flow, Pressure from a tumor

The Alaska Health Department found that Alaska's death rate from traumatic brain injuries is the highest in the nation.* TBI's range from mild to severe. Alaska Native and American Indian people were disproportionately likely to have serious or deadly TBI's — at a rate 3 times higher than the national average.

TBI in Alaska

Silent Epidemic

90% of mild TBI's may go unreported, and there is no loss of consciousness in 90% of concussions

People with brain injury of any severity have two to four times the risk of attempting a suicide or completing a suicide.

Suicide Risk

Substance Use and TBI

Between 23% and 51% of adolescents and adults sustaining a TBI were intoxicated when the injury occurred, and approximately one-quarter of people hospitalized for TBI have a history of substance use disorders.



Signs of a Concussion



1.

Emotional and Behavioral

- sadness
- anger
- frustration
- nervousness
- anxiety
- irritability



2.

Physical

- headaches
- nausea
- dizziness
- sensitivity to light and noise



3.

Sleep

- sleeping more or less than usual
- difficulty falling asleep and staying asleep



4.

Mental

- fogginess and difficulty thinking
- feeling slowed down
- difficulty concentrating and remembering things

Addiction





Substance Use

Leads to disordered eating, poor diet, organ damage, and increased risk of TBI and ABI.

Stimulants

Examples are: crack, cocaine, and methamphetamine. They reduce appetite and lead to weight loss and poor nutrition. Users may stay up for days at a time, and may be dehydrated and have electrolyte imbalances during these periods.

Alcohol

One of the major causes of nutritional deficiency in the US. Most common deficiencies are: B vitamins (B1, B6, and folic acid). B-vitamin deficiency causes anemia and nervous system problems. Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome ("wet brain") occurs when alcohol use causes a lack of vitamin B1. Alcohol also damages the liver and pancreas (responsible for metabolism and nutrition), causing an imbalance of fluids, calories, protein, and electrolytes.

Opiates and Opioids

Includes: codeine, oxycodone, heroin, morphine, and fentanyl. Affects the gastrointestinal system, and often causes constipation.

Marijuana

Heavy cannabis use is associated with lower bone mineral density and increased risk of fractures. Marijuana also leads to gum disease, increases testicular cancer risk by 50%, and mortality risk by 40%



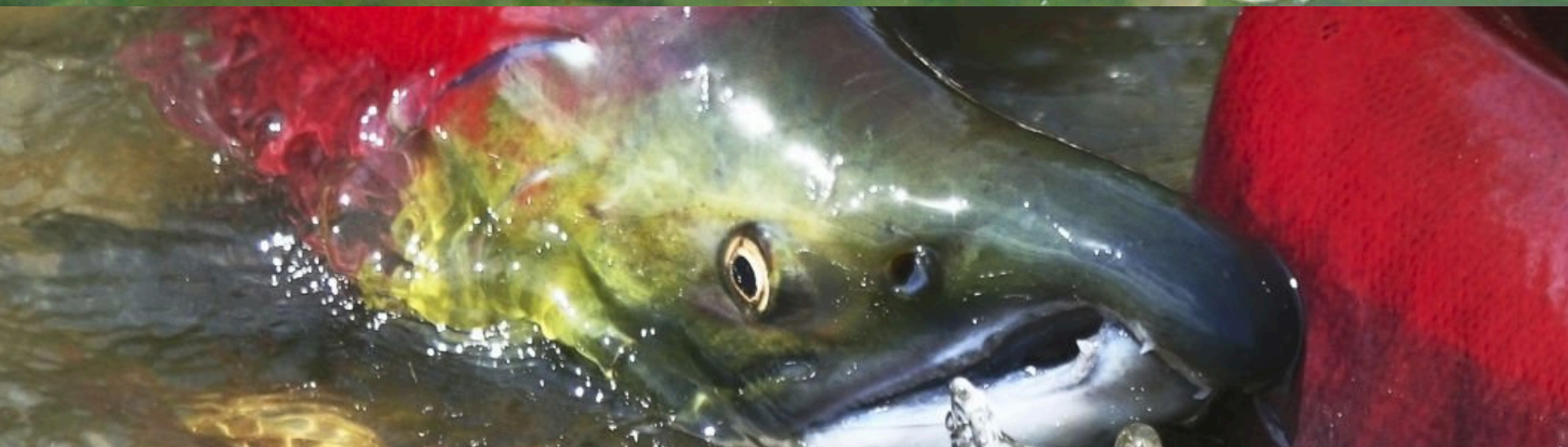
vitamin D3





vitamin D3

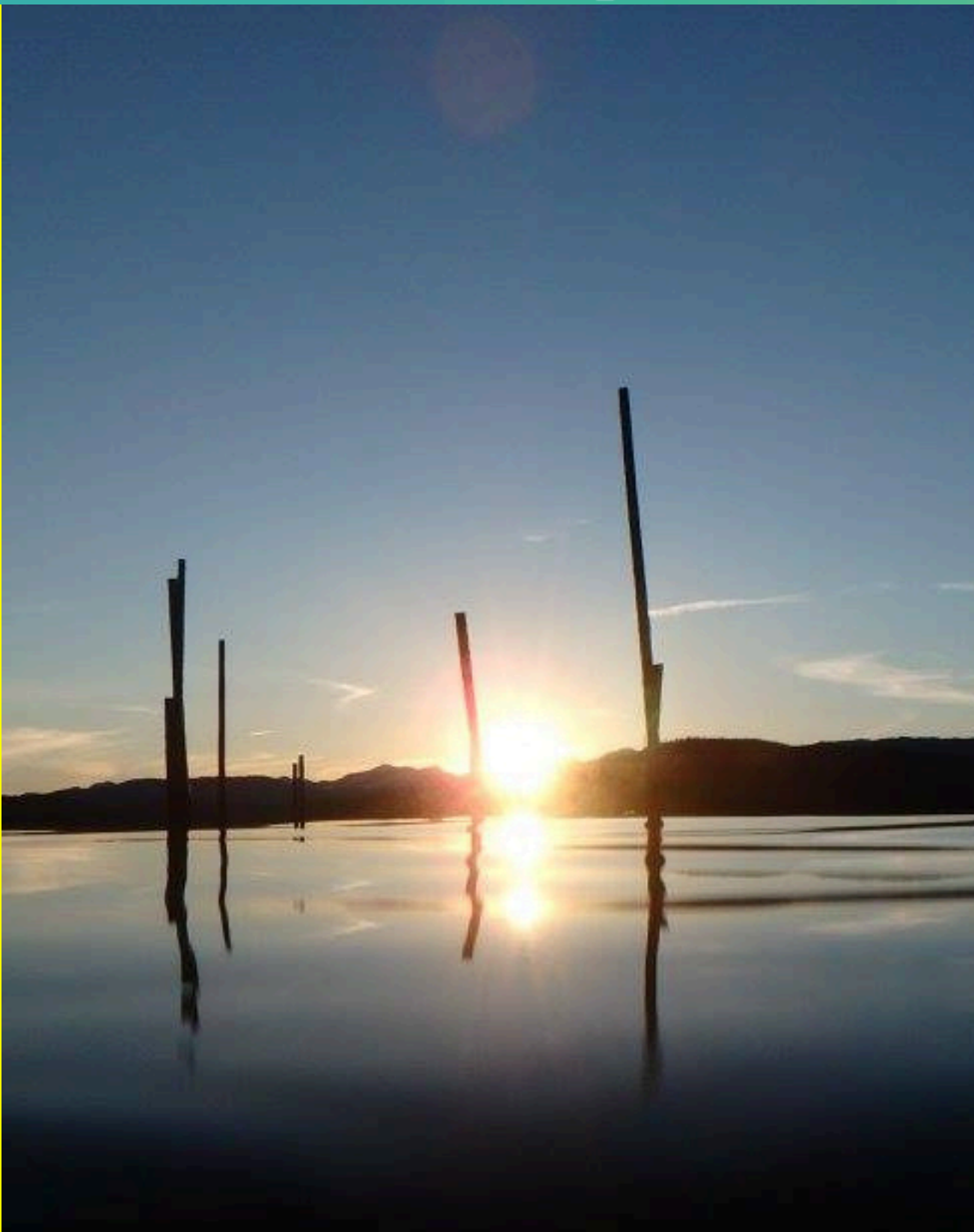




vitamin D3

- Red Salmon
- Mackerel
- Sockeye Salmon
- Steelhead Trout
- Chinook Salmon
- Smelt fish
- Halibut
- Sheefish
- Whitefish
- Atlantic Herring
- Atlantic Sardine
- Rockfish
- Sole Flounder
- Pacific Rockfish
- Beluga Whale Skin
- Beluga Whale Fat
- Ringed Seal Oil
- Bearded Young Seal Oil
- Spotted Seal Oil

Vitamin D Recommendations for the Northern Hemisphere



Months

Above approximately 50° latitude
(north of Winnipeg / London /
Berlin / Prague)

April – September
(or shorter if above
60° latitude)

October – March
(or longer if above
60° latitude)

Daily Dose

15–30 minutes of
midday sun (15 mins
for those with
lighter skin and 30
mins for those with
darker skin)

or

2,000 IU
supplemental
vitamin D

2,000 IU
supplemental
vitamin D



Vitamin D3 from plant or animal sources may be preferable to D2 sourced from fungi.



Taking vitamin D with the largest meal of the day improves absorption.



If you're overweight, you may want to instead take 3,000 IU supplemental vitamin D and even more if obese.

Vitamin D Benefits

Vitamin D has been found to provide a host of potential benefits, including:

1. Reduction in cancer mortality
2. Treatment for painful menstrual periods
3. Fall prevention
4. Common cold prevention
5. Rickets and osteomalacia prevention
6. Reduction in asthma exacerbations
7. Improvement in Crohn's disease symptoms
8. Drop in fibromyalgia pain severity in patients





Substance Use

Leads to disordered eating, poor diet, organ damage, and increased risk of TBI and ABI.

Stimulants

Examples are: crack, cocaine, and methamphetamine. They reduce appetite and lead to weight loss and poor nutrition. Users may stay up for days at a time, and may be dehydrated and have electrolyte imbalances during these periods.



Opiates and Opioids

Includes: codeine, oxycodone, heroin, morphine, and fentanyl. Affects the gastrointestinal system, and often causes constipation.

Alcohol

One of the major causes of nutritional deficiency in the US. Most common deficiencies are: B vitamins (B1, B6, and folic acid). B-vitamin deficiency causes anemia and nervous system problems. Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome ("wet brain") occurs when alcohol use causes a lack of vitamin B1.

Alcohol also damages the liver and pancreas (responsible for metabolism and nutrition), causing an imbalance of fluids, calories, protein, and electrolytes.

Marijuana

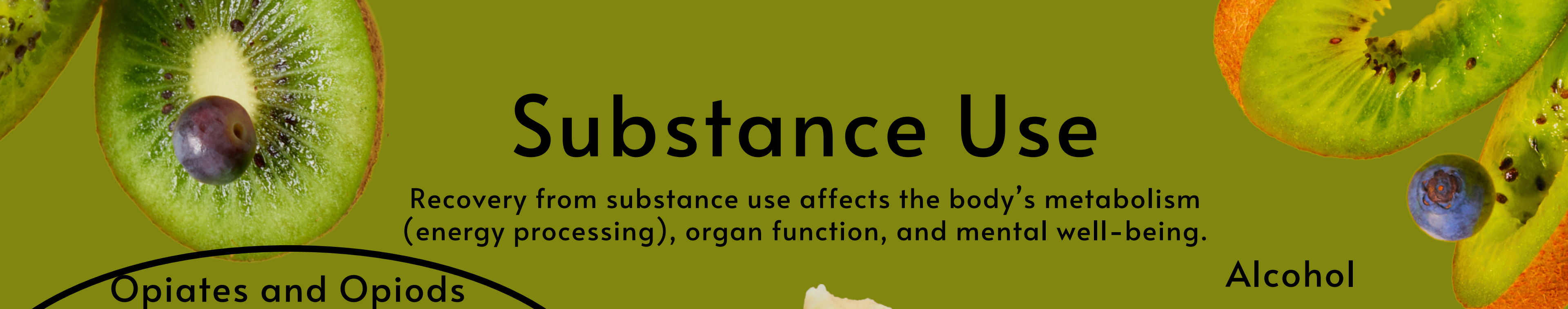
Heavy cannabis use is associated with lower bone mineral density and increased risk of fractures. Marijuana also leads to gum disease, increases testicular cancer risk by 50%, and mortality risk by 40%.

flaxseeds





kiwi



Substance Use

Recovery from substance use affects the body's metabolism (energy processing), organ function, and mental well-being.



Opiates and Opioids

During recovery and withdrawal, diarrhea, nausea and vomiting are common, which can lead to a lack of enough nutrients and an imbalance of electrolytes like sodium, potassium, and chloride.

Stimulants

Returning to a normal diet may be difficult if a person has lost a lot of weight. Memory problems (which can be permanent) are a complication of long-term stimulant use.

Alcohol

Lab tests for protein, iron, and electrolytes may be needed to determine if there is liver disease. Women who drink heavily are at high risk of osteoporosis and need to consume sufficient calcium.

Marijuana

Smoking marijuana leads to nearly 5 times more carbon monoxide in the bloodstream than smoking tobacco. Cannabis users seem to have relatively stiffer arteries for their age, suggesting an acceleration of the aging process.



sparkling
water

potassium





Substance Use

Leads to disordered eating, poor diet, organ damage, and increased risk of TBI and ABI.

Stimulants

Examples are: crack, cocaine, and methamphetamine. They reduce appetite and lead to weight loss and poor nutrition. Users may stay up for days at a time, and may be dehydrated and have electrolyte imbalances during these periods.

Opiates and Opioids

Includes: codeine, oxycodone, heroin, morphine, and fentanyl. Affects the gastrointestinal system, and often causes constipation.

Alcohol

One of the major causes of nutritional deficiency in the US. Most common deficiencies are: B vitamins (B1, B6, and folic acid). B-vitamin deficiency causes anemia and nervous system problems. Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome ("wet brain") occurs when alcohol use causes a lack of vitamin B-one. Alcohol also damages the liver and pancreas (responsible for metabolism and nutrition), causing an imbalance of fluids, calories, protein, and electrolytes.

Marijuana

Heavy cannabis use is associated with lower bone mineral density and increased risk of fractures. Marijuana also leads to gum disease, increases testicular cancer risk by 50%, and mortality risk by 40%.



B vitamins



Nutrition Facts

12 servings per container
Serv size 2 tbsp (10g)

Amount per serving

Calories 40

% Daily Value

Total Fat 0g 0%

Sodium 20mg 1%

Total Carbohydrate 3g 1%

Dietary Fiber 2g 7%

Protein 5g 11%

Iron 1mg 6%

Potassium 214mg 4%

Thiamin (B1) 6.2mg 520%

Riboflavin (B2) 6.3mg 480%

Niacin (B3) 35mg 220%

Vitamin B6 7.2mg 420%

Folate (B9) 353mcg DFE 90%
(208mcg folic acid)

Vitamin B12 15mcg 630%

Not a significant source of sat fat, trans fat, cholesterol, total sugars, added sugars, vitamin D and calcium.

INGREDIENTS: DRIED YEAST, NIACIN, PYRIDOXINE HYDROCHLORIDE (VITAMIN B₆), THIAMIN HYDROCHLORIDE (VITAMIN B₁), RIBOFLAVIN (VITAMIN B₂), FOLIC ACID (VITAMIN B₉), CYANOCOBALAMIN (VITAMIN B₁₂).



VEGAN



NO ARTIFICIAL
COLORS
OR FLAVORS



LOW IN
SODIUM



KETO
FRIENDLY



KOSHER



Certified



Corporation



vitamin B12

cyanocobalamin



Substance Use

Leads to disordered eating, poor diet, organ damage, and increased risk of TBI and ABI.

Stimulants

Examples are: crack, cocaine, and methamphetamine. They reduce appetite and lead to weight loss and poor nutrition. Users may stay up for days at a time, and may be dehydrated and have electrolyte imbalances during these periods.

Alcohol

One of the major causes of nutritional deficiency in the US. Most common deficiencies are: B vitamins (B1, B6, and folic acid). B-vitamin deficiency causes anemia and nervous system problems. Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome ("wet brain") occurs when alcohol use causes a lack of vitamin B-one. Alcohol also damages the liver and pancreas (responsible for metabolism and nutrition), causing an imbalance of fluids, calories, protein, and electrolytes.



Opiates and Opioids

Includes: codeine, oxycodone, heroin, morphine, and fentanyl. Affects the gastrointestinal system, and often causes constipation.

Marijuana

Heavy cannabis use is associated with lower bone mineral density and increased risk of fractures. Marijuana also leads to gum disease, increases testicular cancer risk by 50%, and mortality risk by 40%

phytates in beans





lung health

fertility



learning difficulties





diet

consume things that
don't consume you

“The body is always seeking to balance itself. It will always look for something external if there is an internal imbalance going on.”







- almonds
- Brazil nuts
- cashews
- chia seeds
- hazelnuts/filberts
- hemp seeds
- macadamia nuts
- pecans
- pistachios
- pumpkin seeds
- sesame seeds
- sunflower seeds
- walnuts

mental health

depression, anxiety, and suicide:

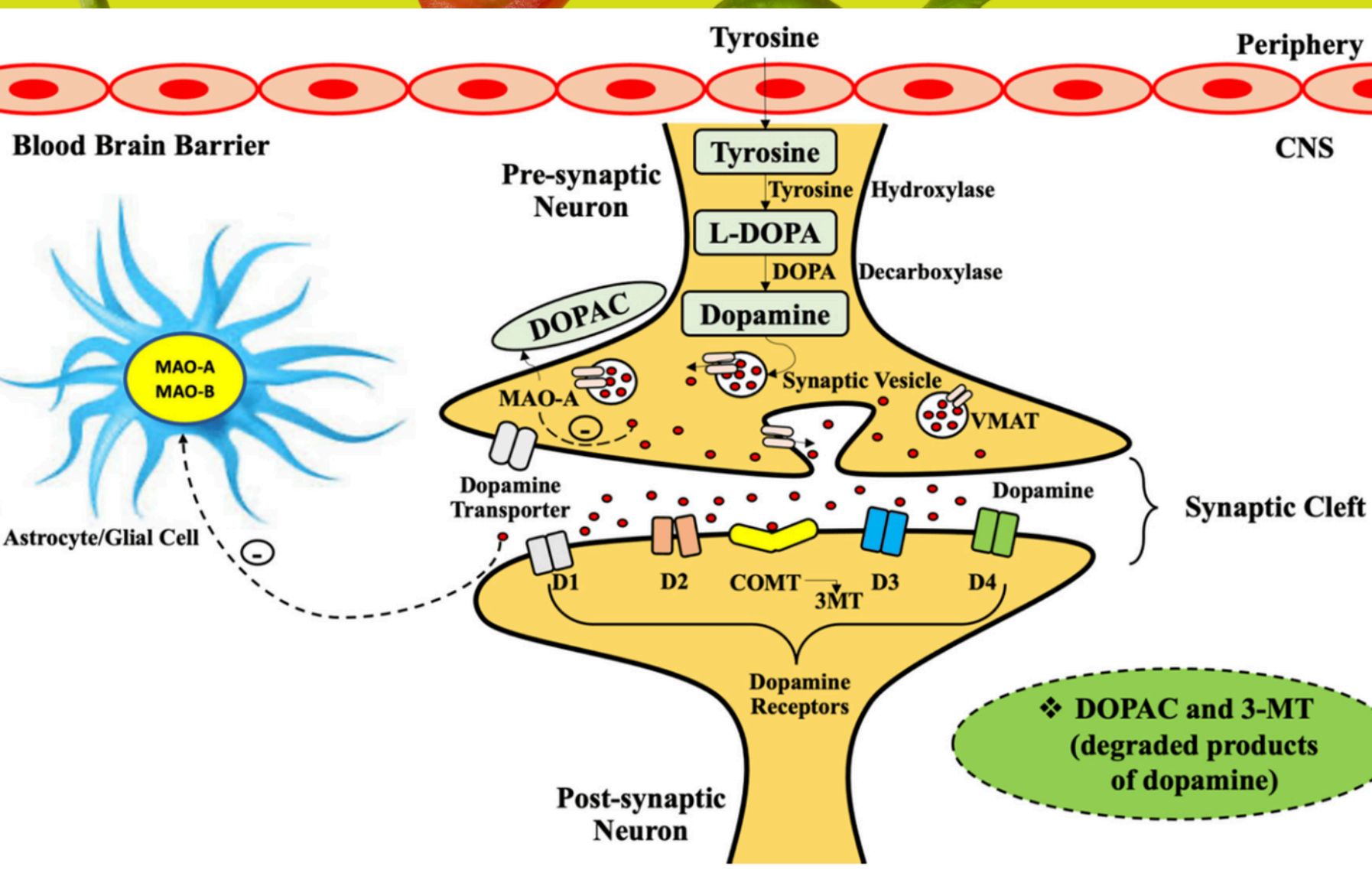
Major depression is a commonly diagnosed condition, and it undermines substance abuse recovery success. It is believed depression may be caused by unusually low monoamine levels in the brain as a result of elevated MAO levels in the brain (monoamine oxidase). MAO is an enzyme that breaks down excess monoamines neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine.

impact on physical health:

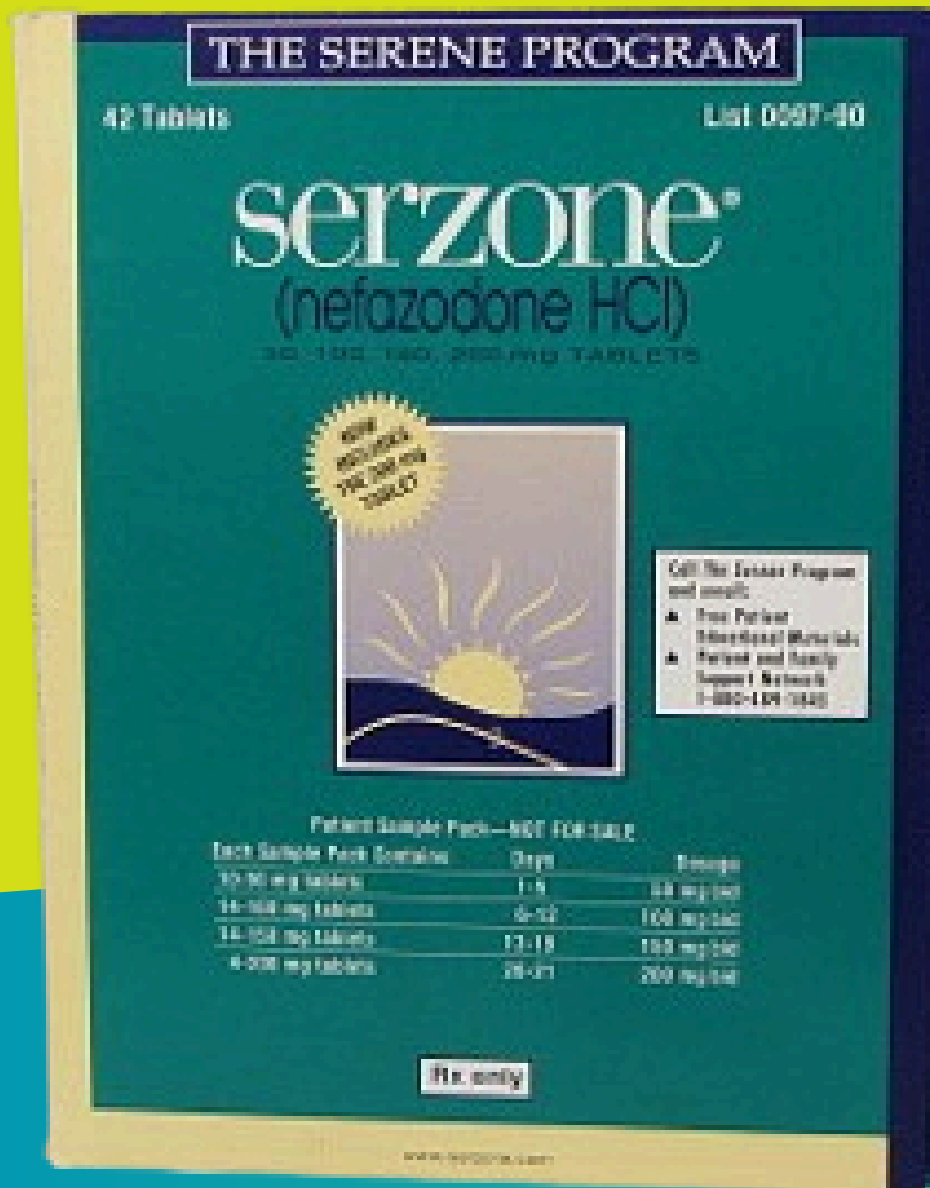
Positive psychological health is associated with reduced risk of physical illness.

what's the solution?

There are many plant foods, however, that are natural MAO inhibitors, making you feel happier, calmer, and more energetic, without the negative side effects of drugs that are commonly prescribed for this.



common antidepressants





“the cheese effect”



natural, depression-fighting MAO inhibitors:
apples, berries, grapes, onions, green tea, etc.



natural monoamine oxidase inhibitors



cloves



cinnamon



oregano



nutmeg

lycopene: a powerful antioxidant



- **tomatoes**
- **watermelon**
- **pink grapefruit**
- **guava**
- **papaya**
- **and more**



tomatoes



amla (Indian gooseberry)

the world's most antioxidant-
packed uncommon spice



Category 22 Spices and herbs			
Product	Manufacturer / product label / country of origin	Procured in	Antioxidant content in mmol/100g
Clove, whole, dried	India	India	252.04
Amalaki (Amla), powder	The Himalaya Herbal Health Care	India	301.14
Triphala, powder 	The Himalaya Herbal Health Care	India	706.25



seeds and serotonin



sesame seeds



sunflower seeds

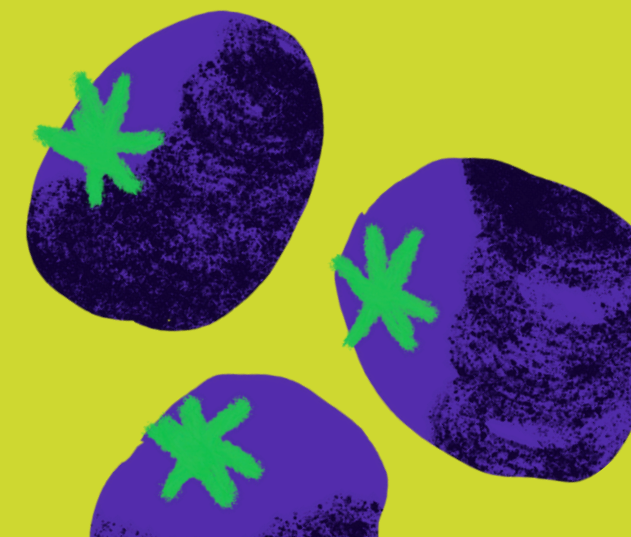


pumpkin seeds





blueberries





VS.





**improve your
mood with
*water***



**exercise as an
antidepressant**



vs.





romaine lettuce



kiwi

almonds



sleep



goji berries



raspberries



tart cherries

hide your nutrients (if you need to)



how much can you “hide” in a meal?

- 
- peas
 - corn
 - carrots
 - garlic
 - mushrooms
 - onion
 - ginger
 - sesame seeds
 - zucchini
 - onion powder
 - garlic powder
 - sesame oil

- 
- flaxseeds
 - chia seeds
 - oats
 - pumpkin seeds
 - sunflower seeds
 - cashews
 - pecans
 - walnuts
 - ginger
 - cinnamon
 - nutmeg
 - cloves

- 
- tomatoes
 - garlic
 - onion
 - carrots
 - mushrooms
 - bell peppers
 - basil
 - rosemary
 - thyme
 - oregano
 - marjoram
 - parsley
 - onion powder
 - garlic powder

● essentially everything

- 
- tomatoes
 - garlic
 - corn
 - lettuce
 - onion
 - carrots
 - mushrooms
 - beans
 - bell peppers
 - mango
 - cayenne pepper
 - paprika
 - cumin
 - basil
 - rosemary
 - thyme
 - oregano
 - marjoram
 - parsley
 - cilantro
 - lime juice
 - lemon juice
 - onion powder
 - garlic powder

smoothies
are your
best
friend







thank
you !

Main Point

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

1.

Main Point

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

2.

3.

Main Point

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

4.

Main Point

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.



Resource Page

Use these design resources in your Canva Presentation.

Fonts

This presentation template uses the following free fonts:

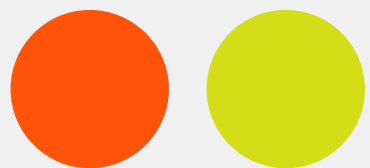
TITLES:
Poppins

HEADERS:
Poppins

BODY COPY:
Poppins

You can find these fonts online too.

Colors



#FF540A #D3DE18

Design Elements



what goes in my smoothie

almonds● amla powder🌿 arugula apple🍏 beet juice🍷 beets● black
beans● blackberries● black pepper● blueberries🫐 brazil nuts● broccoli🥦
carrot🥕 cashews● cauliflower● cayenne pepper🌶️ chard● cherries🍒 chia
seeds● chickpeas● cinnamon📦 cloves🌰 (ground) coconut shreds🥥
coriander● cranberry juice🍷 cumin● date syrup🍯 dried cranberries●
edamame beans📦 fennel seed● flaxseed (whole) fresh ginger📦 ginger
powder📦 grapefruit (fresh)🍹 grapefruit juice🍹 grapes🍇 honey🍯 horsetail
tea leaves kale🥬 kidney beans🫘 kiwi🥝 lentils● mango🥭 navy beans🫘
nutmeg🌰 (ground) oats🌿 papaya juice🍹 papaya● peach🍑 pear🍐 pecans
🍰 pineapple juice🍍 pineapple (fresh)🍍 pinto beans plums● pumpkin seeds
● raspberries rosemary🌿 spinach🌿 strawberries🍓 sunflower seeds🌻 sweet
potato🍠 turmeric📦 walnuts🌰 water💧 whole dates● whole flaxseed wild
blueberries (frozen)

Credits

This presentation template is free for everyone to use thanks to the following:

Slides Carnival

for the presentation template

Pexels, Pixabay

for the photos

Happy designing!



1.

Main
Point

3.

Main
Point

Briefly elaborate on
what you want to discuss.

2.

Main
Point

Briefly elaborate on
what you want to discuss.

4.

Main
Point

Briefly elaborate on
what you want to discuss.

resources

Main Point



Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

Main Point



Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.

Main Point



Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit,
sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua.