



# Supporting your wellbeing

Session 6: Food and mood

# SUMMARY OF TOPICS

Links between food and mood

Balance

Healthy eating quiz

Healthy eating for a healthy mind

Tips

Keeping a record

# HOW ARE FOOD AND MOOD LINKED?

You may be wondering why a series of workshops related to mental wellbeing includes a session on food! However, food is an essential factor in having good levels of mental wellbeing. It can help to:

- Improve your overall mood.
- Reduce fluctuations in your mood.
- Make you feel more energised.
- Help your concentration.
- Feel less anxious.





## Food and Mood Video



# IT'S ALL ABOUT BALANCE...

This doesn't mean that you should never have a takeaway or have a feast of chocolate for a movie night!

But by focusing on eating well for the majority of the time, this will lead to an improved feeling of wellbeing.

# What do you know about healthy eating?

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BUPA QUIZ

# HEALTHY EATING FOR A HEALTHY MIND



- EAT REGULARLY
- STAY HYDRATED
- EAT PLENTY OF FRUIT AND VEG
- LOOK AFTER YOUR GUT
- GET ENOUGH PROTEIN
- BE CAREFUL WITH CAFFEINE
- EAT THE RIGHT FATS

# HEALTHY EATING

*Further guidance available from  
NHS and Mind*

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## EAT REGULARLY

if you don't eat at regular times and miss meals, this can cause your blood sugar to fluctuate which can have an impact on your mood, as it may make you feel irritable or tired.

Tips:

- Eat breakfast to get your day off to a healthy start.
- Try eating little and often rather than fewer big meals.
- Don't eat too much high sugar food, as this can cause your blood sugar to spike, potentially impacting on your mood.



# HEALTHY EATING

*Further guidance available from  
NHS and Mind*



## STAY HYDRATED

Not drinking enough fluids can lead to you struggling with concentration, which can in turn lead to feelings of frustration.

Tips:

- The recommended fluid intake is 6–8 glasses per day, but this may need to be higher if you are particularly active.
- Water is free, so there is no excuse for not drinking it!
- Other non-alcoholic drinks also count towards your intake, but be mindful of sugar and caffeine.

# HEALTHY EATING

*Further guidance available from  
NHS and Mind*

## FRUIT AND VEG

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It's recommended that you eat at least 5 portions of a variety of fruit and veg every day. Try and eat a variety of different types.

Tips:

- Frozen, canned and juiced fruit and veg also count towards your daily total.
- A general guide for a portion is a handful.
- Make sauces with vegetables in for an easy way to increase your intake.

# HEALTHY EATING

*Further guidance available from  
NHS and Mind*

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## LOOK AFTER YOUR GUT

Sometimes your gut can reflect how you are feeling emotionally. If you're stressed or anxious this can make your gut slow down or speed up. For healthy digestion you need to have plenty of fibre, fluid and exercise regularly.

Tips:

- Make gradual instead of sudden changes to your diet to give yourself time to adjust.
- If stress is affecting your gut, try some relaxation exercises.

# HEALTHY EATING

*Further guidance available from  
NHS and Mind*

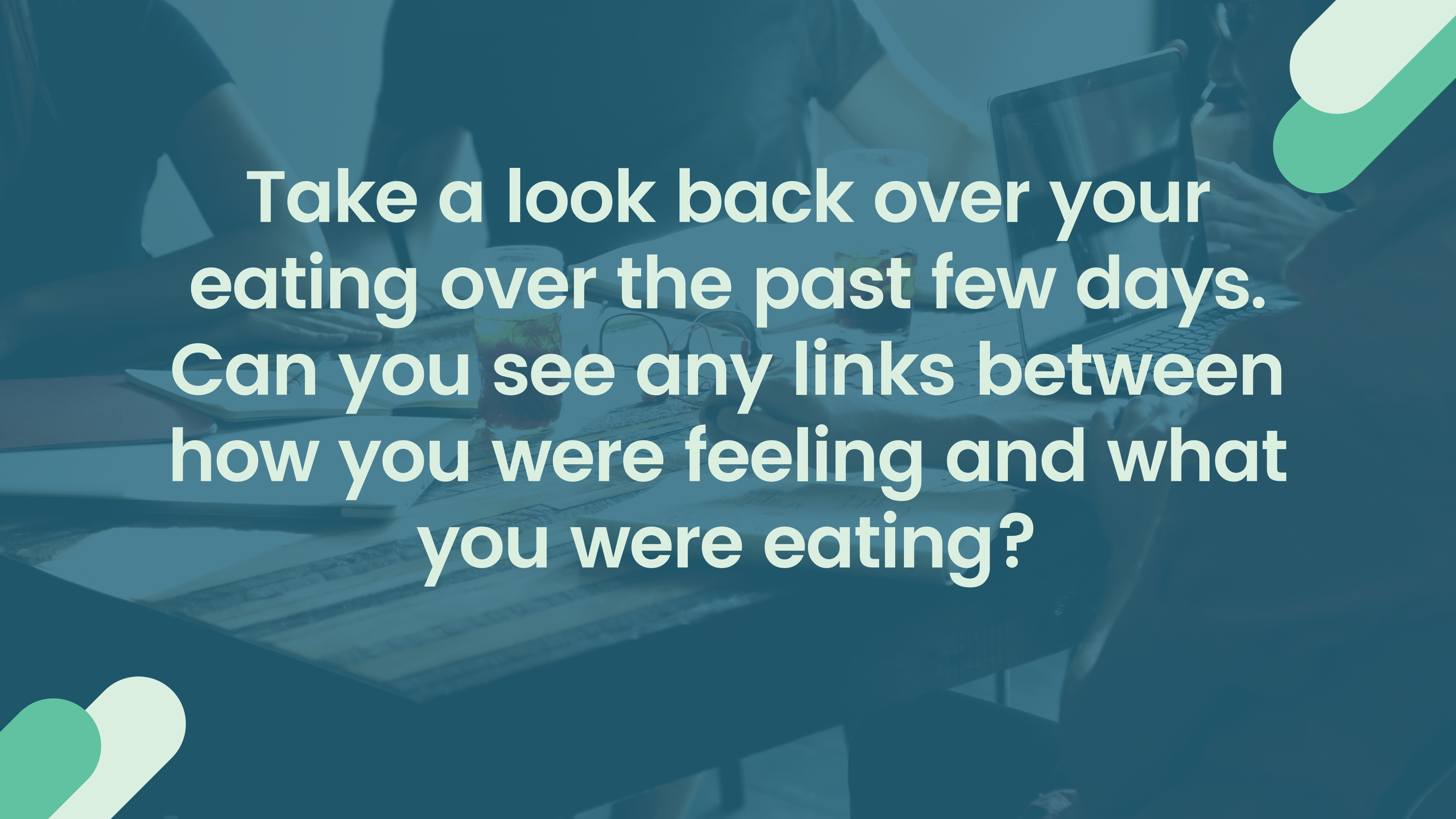


## CAFFEINE

Many students turn to caffeine based products such as coffee or energy drinks when deadlines are fast approaching. Whilst this may help as a short term measure, it can also exacerbate feelings of stress and anxiety and also cause difficulties with your sleep pattern.

Tips:

- Avoid drinking caffeine after around 2–3pm.
- Make sure you get enough sleep rather than staying awake with caffeine.

A group of people is gathered around a table in a meeting, looking at documents and laptops. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter. In the top right and bottom left corners, there are decorative graphic elements consisting of overlapping white and green rounded shapes.

**Take a look back over your eating over the past few days. Can you see any links between how you were feeling and what you were eating?**

# Isn't healthy eating too expensive on a student budget...?

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[Take a look at this blog from Save the Student](#)

# FURTHER RESOURCES

- [Save the Student](#) – lots of money saving tips and advice for eating on a student budget.
- [Student Eats](#) – easy, cheap and healthy student friendly recipes.
- [Mind](#) – recipes to help support a healthy mind, with a balanced combination of vitamins.
- [Keele](#) – healthy recipes from the university's head chef to suit a range of skill levels.

# ONGOING SUPPORT

[HTTPS://WWW.NHS.UK/ONEYOU/H  
OW-ARE-YOU-QUIZ/](https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/how-are-you-quiz/)