OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS & THE BRAIN

Let's talk about food and health of the mind.

WHAT ARE OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS?
- These are important polyunsaturated fats that can only be obtained from the diet.
- They form components of cell membranes that help preserve cell health via anti-inflammatory effects and facilitate communication between brain cells.
- They are essential components for brain function and development.

WHAT'S THE MECHANISM BEHIND OMEGA-3's?
- These benefits may be related to increased efficacy of serotonin in the brain or anti-inflammatory effects.
- Serotonin recognised as a 'happy chemical' as it contributes to wellbeing and happiness as a neurotransmitter that impacts levels of mood, anxiety and happiness.

WHAT DOES RESEARCH SAY?
- An omega-3 deficient diet tends to lower learning and memory function.
- Studies have found links between omega-3 consumption and anti-despressant effects, more significantly so in those already taking anti-depressant medications.
- Lower levels of serotonin have been associated with poor memory and low mood, which may lead to anxiety, aggression and low self-esteem.

WHERE CAN THEY BE FOUND?
Foods rich with these fatty acids include, fatty fish, flaxseed oil, chia seeds, flaxseeds & walnuts.
WHAT ARE SOME RECIPE IDEAS?

Tuna Salad: Serves 4
- 425g tin of tuna (*canned tuna has comparable omega-3 content to fresh tuna)
- 400g can chickpeas
- 2 avocados
- 2 large tomatoes, cut into wedges
- A handful of cherry tomatoes
- 1 cucumber
- 1/2 red onion
- Drizzle with olive oil and lemon juice

Mix ingredients into a bowl and season with salt and pepper

WHERE DO I GO FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

- https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/omega-3-fish-oil-for-brain-health

HOW TO MEET THE RECOMMENDATIONS?

- Eat plenty of omega-3 rich sea animals at least once of twice a week
- Buy omega-3 enriched eggs if possible
- Use oils that contain low levels of omega-6, such as olive oil, to improve your omega 3: 6 ratio
- If needed, supplement with fish oil tablets