

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### ASFANDIYAR ALI AGA

Nutrition is a crucial yet often overlooked component in achieving optimal mental health and cognition, serving as one of the missing pieces in the complex puzzle of the gut-brain connection. The gut-brain axis highlights how gut health directly influences brain function, with gut microbiota playing a significant role in neurotransmitter production that regulates mood and cognition. A diet rich in whole foods, including omega-3 fatty acids, prebiotics, probiotics, polyphenols, and B vitamins, supports both gut and brain health. By prioritising these nutrients, individuals can enhance cognitive function and emotional stability, addressing the gut-brain conflict that arises from poor nutrition. Thus, good nutrition is essential to mental wellness and a missing puzzle piece in the bidirectional gut-brain relationship that offers a promising pathway to not only enhance mental health, but also improve cognitive functions and overall wellbeing.



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