

# Nutritional Disorders & The Nervous System

By

Dr. Mahpara Safdar

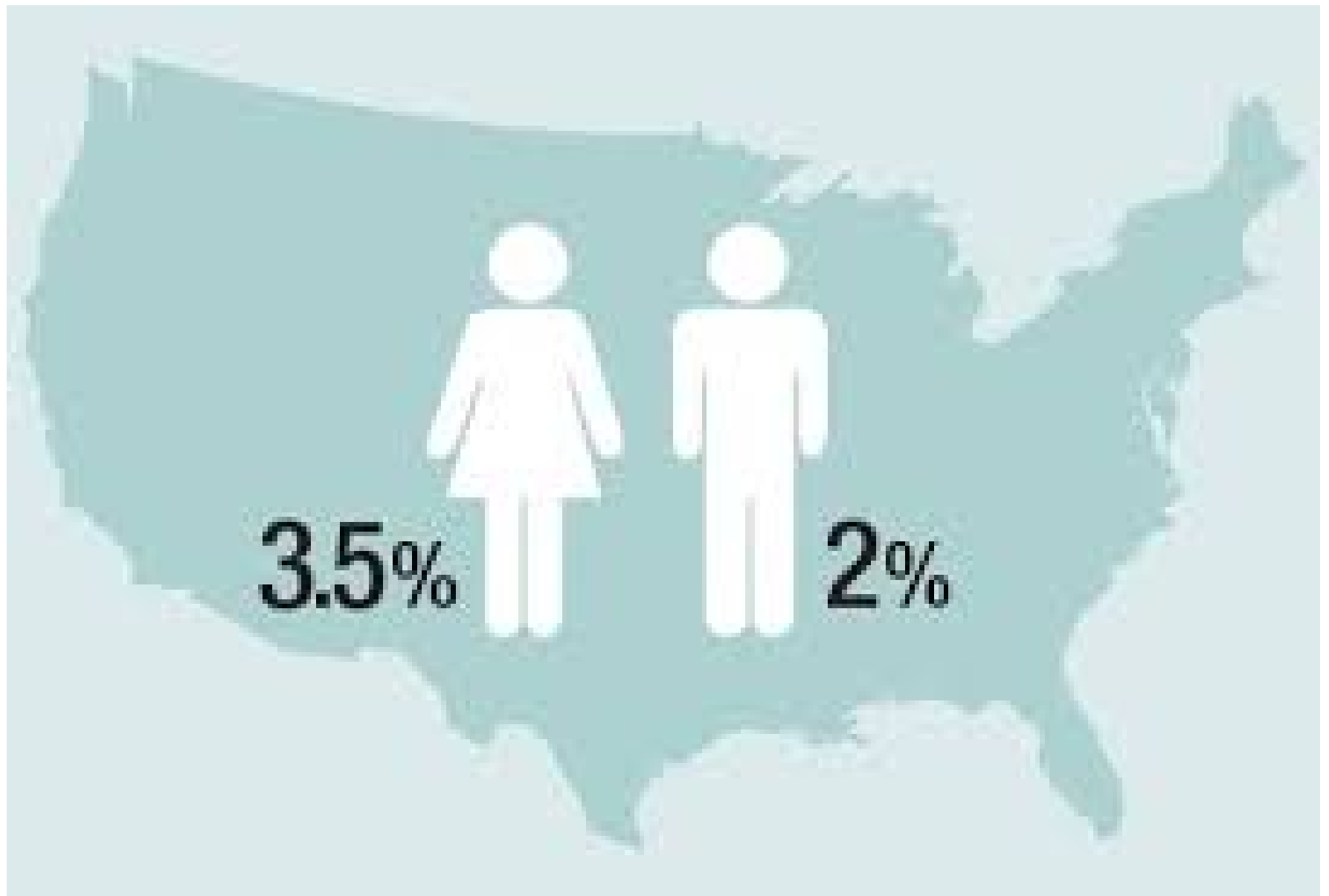
Assistant Professor

Dept: of Home & Health Sciences

AIOU, Islamabad

# Nutritional disorders





“Food for thought  
is no substitute for  
the real thing.”

~ *Walt Kelly*



# **WARNING:**

Reflections in this  
mirror may be distorted  
by socially constructed  
ideas of 'beauty'

# Perfect body?



# OTHER PSYCHIATRIC CONDITIONS AFFECTING FOOD INTAKE

Mood Disorders

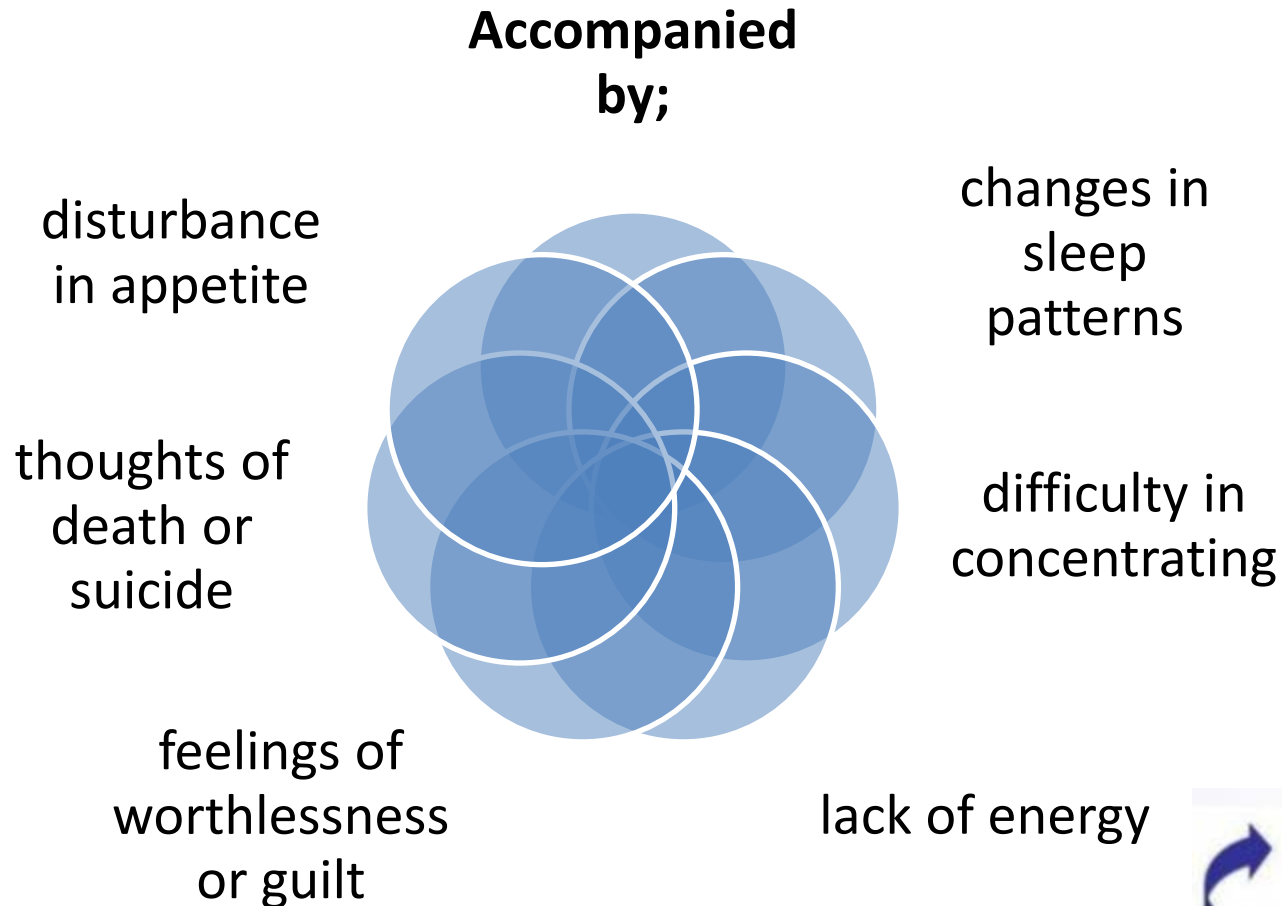
Schizophrenia

Substance Use Disorders

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder

Psychotropic Medications ↓ Food Intake

# Mood Disorders





# Mood Disorders

Besides depression

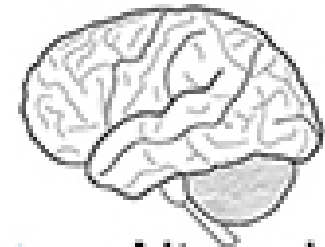
adjustment disorders in response to acute stressors and grief reactions

transient anorexia or loss of appetite

weight loss

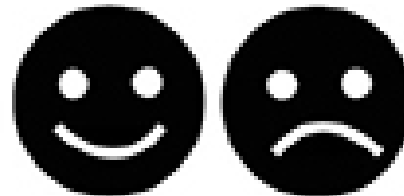
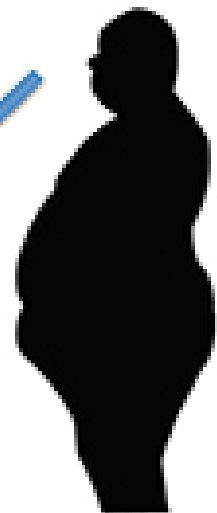


**Central  
biological factors**



**Altered brain  
signaling**

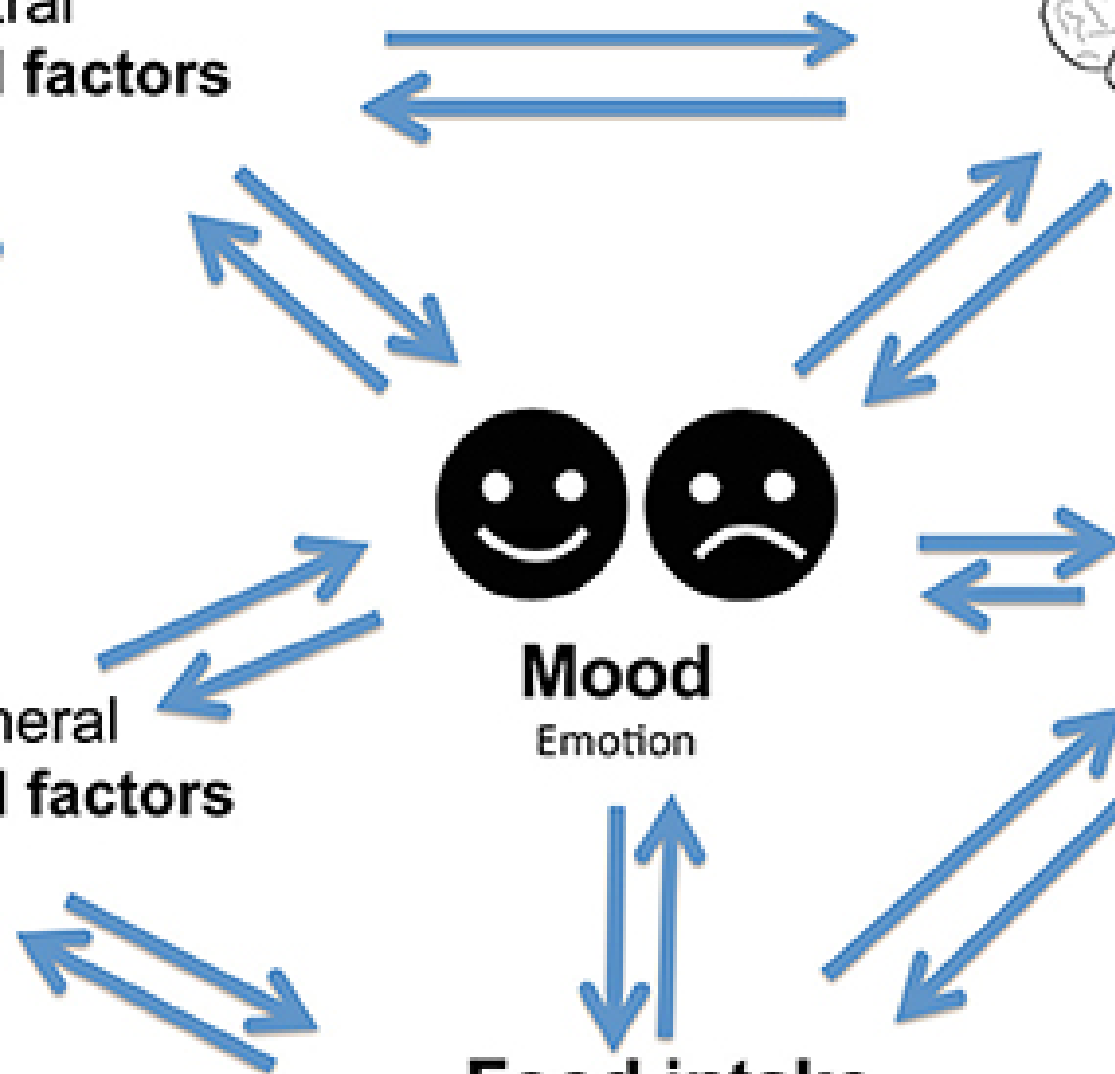
**Obesity**



**Mood**  
Emotion

**Food intake**  
Food choice

**Peripheral  
biological factors**

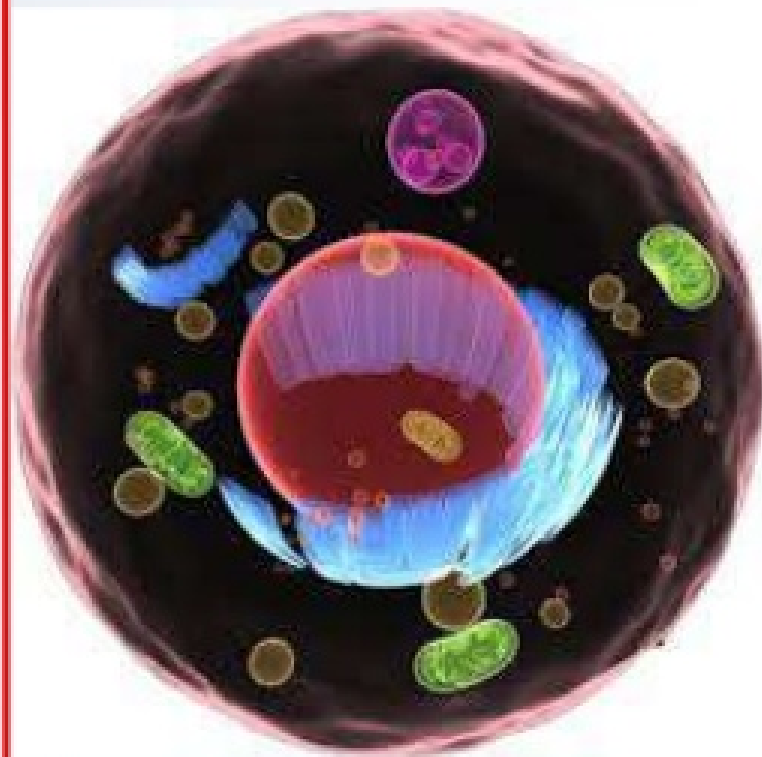


# FOOD & MOOD – Fat

- Low plasma cholesterol associated with depression<sup>1</sup> and anxiety<sup>2</sup>
  - Part of every cell membrane
  - Building block for hormones
  - Statins???

## CONCLUSION:

- Fat supports mental health!



1. Leyse-Wallace, R. (2008). *Linking nutrition to mental health*. Lincoln, NE: iUniverse.

2. Carson, R, E. (2012). *The brain fix*. Deerfield, FL: Health Communication, Inc.

# Serotonin-rich foods



walnuts



hickory nuts



pineapple



bananas



kiwis



plums



tomatoes





Where are those  
voices coming from?

The Radio Told Me To  
Free All The Zoo  
Animals

I Saw Elephants  
Under My Bed

Aliens are contacting me

Maybe I  
Am Jesus

They're Following Me!

**SCHIZOPHRENIA**



# Symptoms





 CARTOONSTOCK  
.com





Search ID: for0253








# Substance use disorder

- Marijuana  food intake
- Cannabis withdrawal  food intake
- Alcoholism  Wernicke-Korsakoff
- Cocaine  food intake



# Attention Deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

2% to 18% prevalence

Cause - genes and environment (diet)

1922– high-sugar diets worsen ADHD

1970s – food additives deteriorate ADHD

Azo dyes – urticaria-histamine release- ADHD

Tartrazine - urinary zinc excretion - zinc deficiency

# Attention Deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)

- Imaging studies - reduced blood flow to the frontal lobes in children with ADHD

Omega-3 deficiencies in children with ADHD

Optimal blood flow to the brain depends on

- Omega-3 fatty acids
- Thiamin
- Pyridoxine and
- Folic acid





# Psychotropic Medications

Several antidepressants, mood stabilizers, and antipsychotics are associated with weight gain

Stimulant drugs used in the treatment of ADHD tend to reduce appetite and may result in weight loss

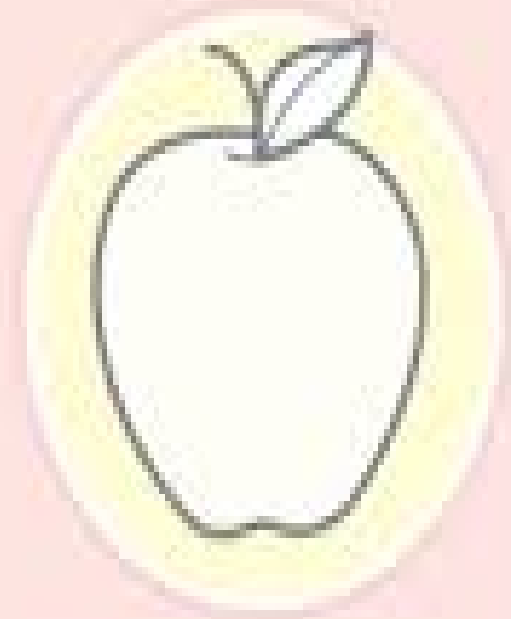
# **An Eating Disorder Requires Treatment From:**



**A Doctor**



**A Therapist**



**A Nutritionist**



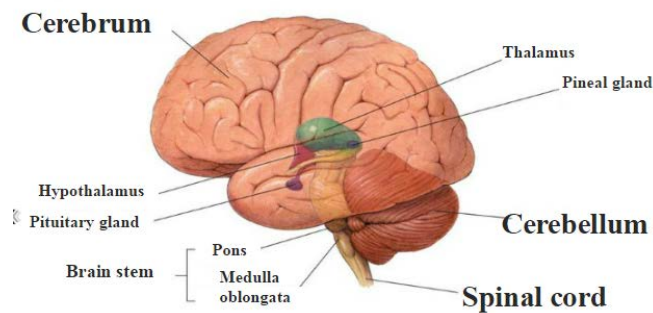
**“Fuel Your Brain, Feel Your Best”**

# Nervous System

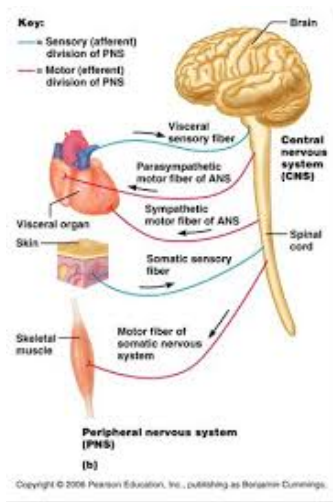
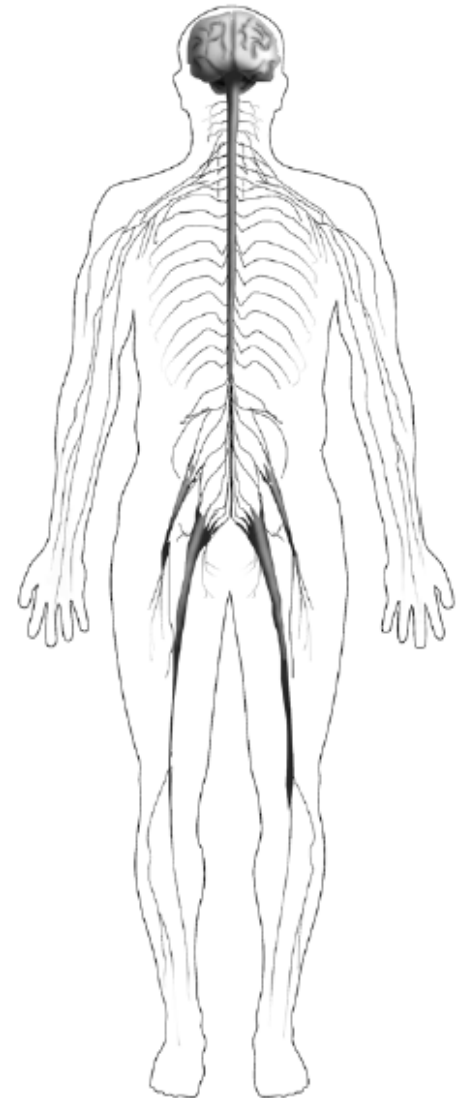
- Central Nervous System

  - Brain

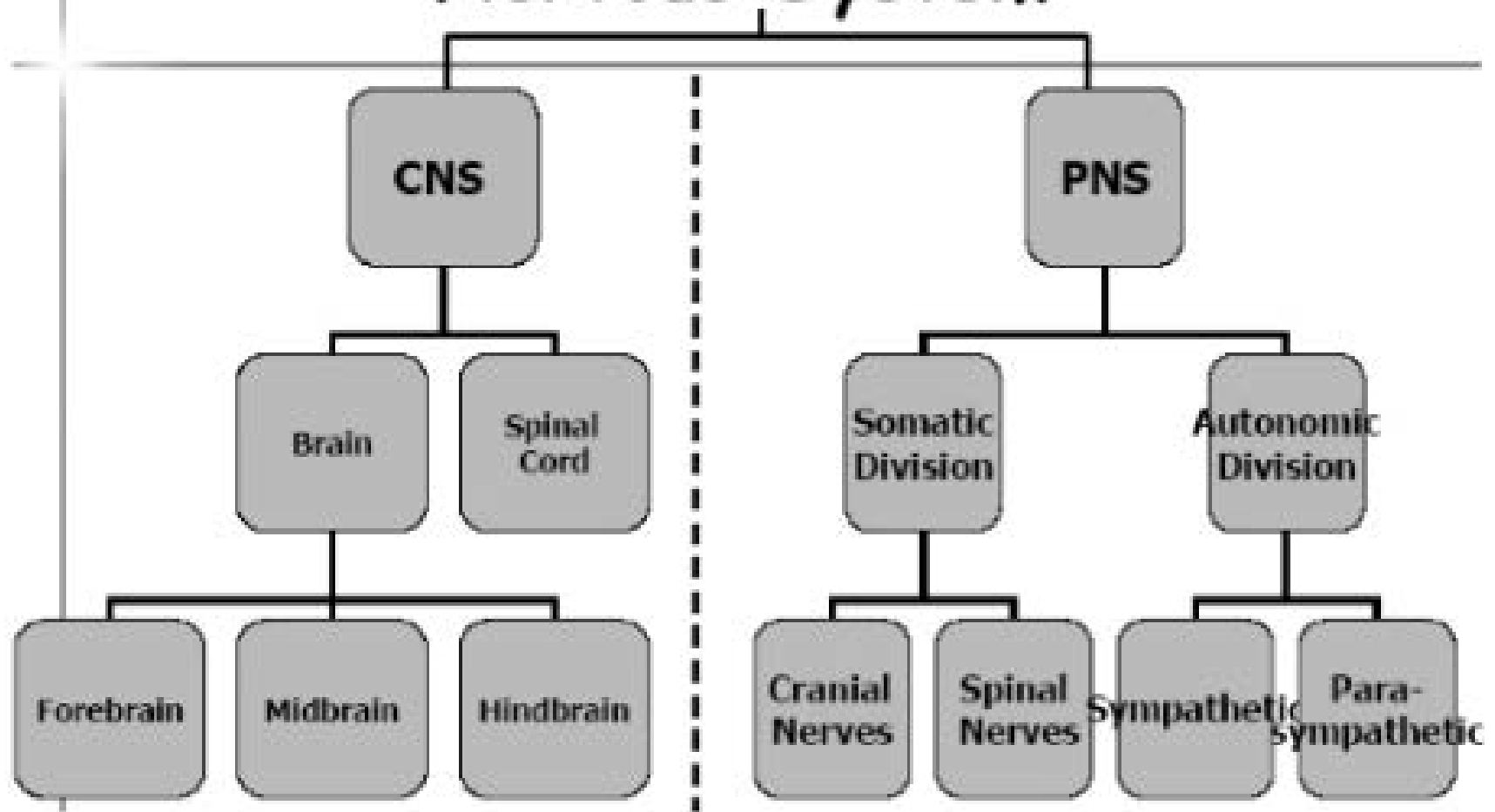
  - Spinal Cord



- Peripheral Nervous System



# Basic Divisions of the Nervous System





## **Factors Important to Understanding Nervous System Pathology**

---

1. The nervous system consists of highly specialized functional units called neurons. Damage to neurons is irreversible because neurons cannot regenerate. Injury to certain areas of the brain result in loss of function to that particular area. A loss of vision center in the occipital lobe causes blindness. Lesions of the respiratory centers in the medulla oblongata causes death.
2. The central nervous system (CNS) is protected from mechanical injury by the bones of the skull and vertebrae. If the vertebrae were detached from one another or dislocated, the spinal cord may be severed.


## Factors Important to Understanding Nervous System Pathology

---

3. The CNS is separated from the remainder of the body by meninges and by a bloodbrain barrier. The brain is protected from harmful substances in that the blood or cerebral spinal fluid (CSF) acts as filters.

Examples:

- Bilirubin does not enter the CNS compartment, even in the most severe forms of jaundice.
- Glucose concentration in the CSF is at a level that is one-half that of the blood concentration.



## Factors Important to Understanding Nervous System Pathology

---

4. The brain and the spinal cord are surrounded by CSF.

- □ CSF separates the brain from the meninges and serves as a mechanical buffer (cushion) between the brain and bones of the skull
- □ CSF serves as a venue to remove metabolites and waste products from the brain
- □ CSF remains constant under normal circumstances in regards to rate of production, flow and reabsorption



## Overview of Major Diseases

---

The nervous system is affected by many diseases such as

- ☐ Developmental and genetic diseases
- ☐ Diseases caused by trauma
- ☐ Circulatory disorders
- ☐ Infectious diseases
- ☐ Autoimmune disorders
- ☐ Metabolic and nutritional diseases
- ☐ Neurodegenerative diseases of unknown etiology
- ☐ Brain tumors

## Overview of Major Diseases

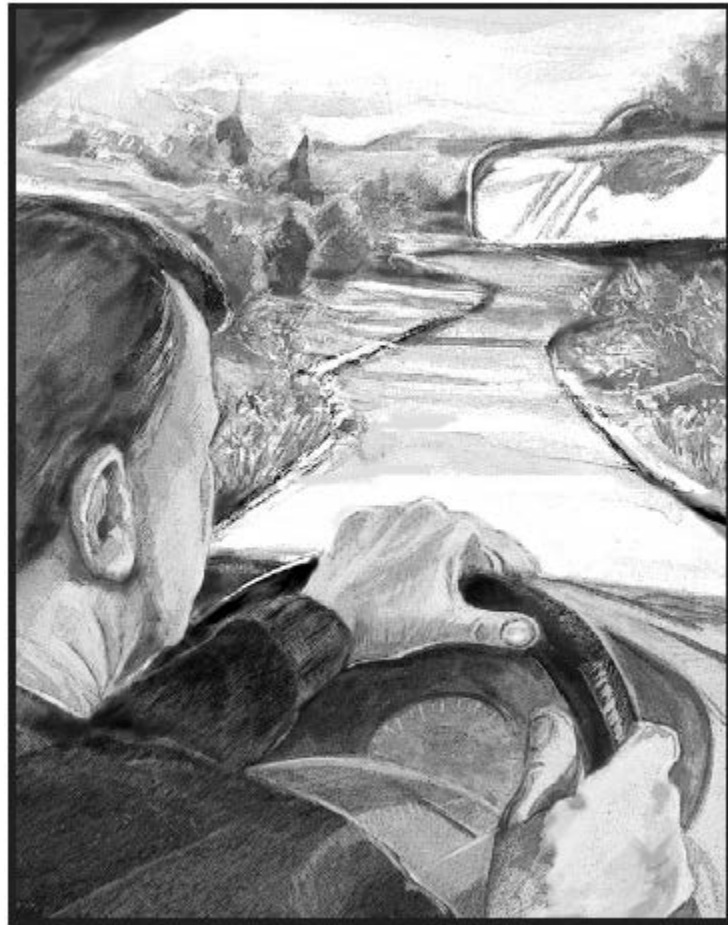
---

The nervous system is affected by many diseases such as

- ☐ Developmental and genetic diseases
- ☐ Diseases caused by trauma
- ☐ Circulatory disorders
- ☐ Infectious diseases
- ☐ Autoimmune disorders
- ☐ Metabolic and nutritional diseases
- ☐ Neurodegenerative diseases of unknown etiology
- ☐ Brain tumors











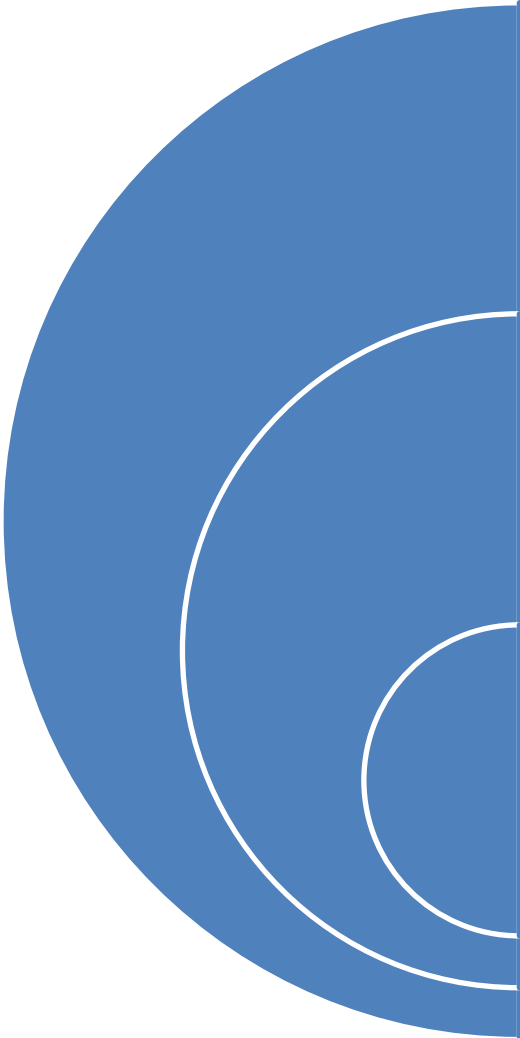






- Brain function is unavoidably dependent on a constant dietary supply of appropriate nutrients






According to FAO, nearly 30% (~ 777 million people) of the world population are malnourished.

Of them, 150 million children worldwide are underweight, and 182 million are physically and cognitively stunted.

Moreover, protein-energy malnutrition contributes to 5 million child deaths per year.



## The effects of malnutrition on the nervous system

- isolated involvement of the peripheral nervous system that produces blindness, deafness, paralysis, or
- sensory deficits to complex lesions of the spinal cord and CNS that lead to mental retardation, cognitive dysfunction, and gait limitations

## POPULATIONS AT RISK

the poor

the homeless

people addicted to alcohol  
and substance abusers

some patients with chronic  
psychiatric conditions

demented elderly persons





Under  
nutrition



obesity



“the double  
burden of  
malnutrition”



# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION



glucose, amino acids,  
fatty acids, vitamins,  
and minerals-required  
for normal brain  
function

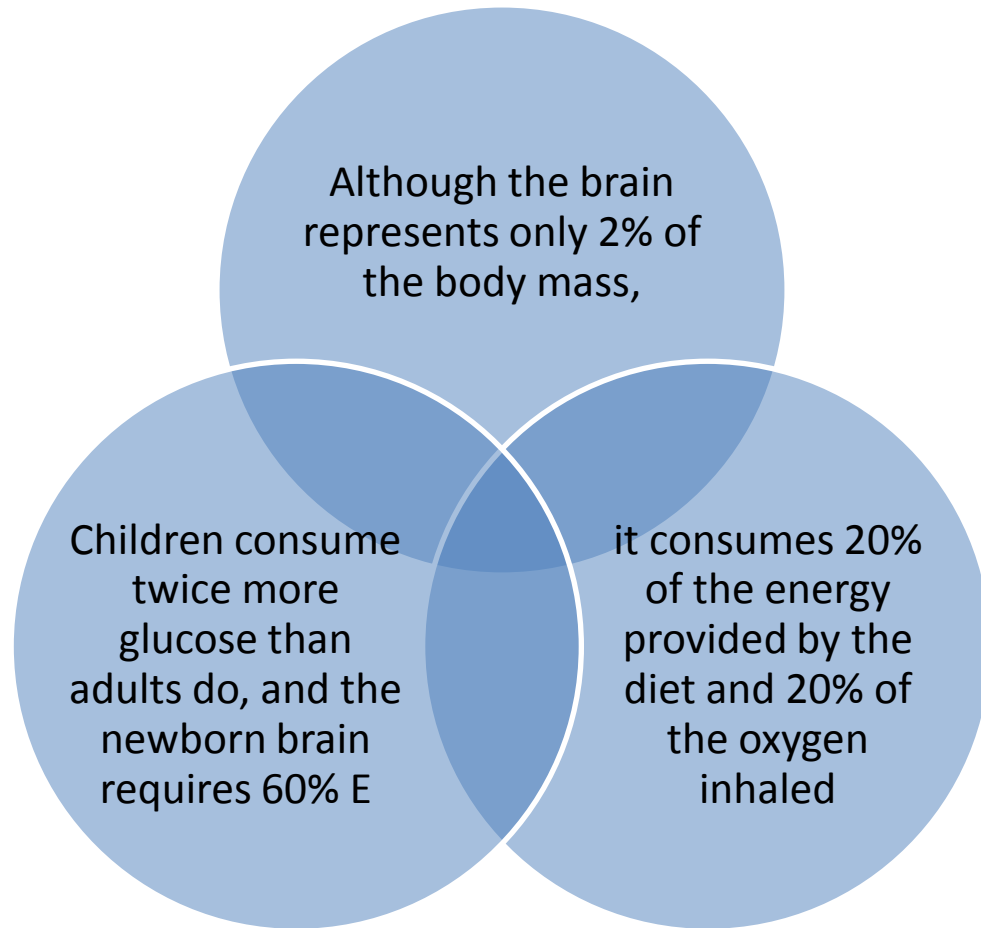
# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

Food is also needed to;

maintain the integrity of cellular  
membranes in the brain and

the production of neurotransmitters

# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

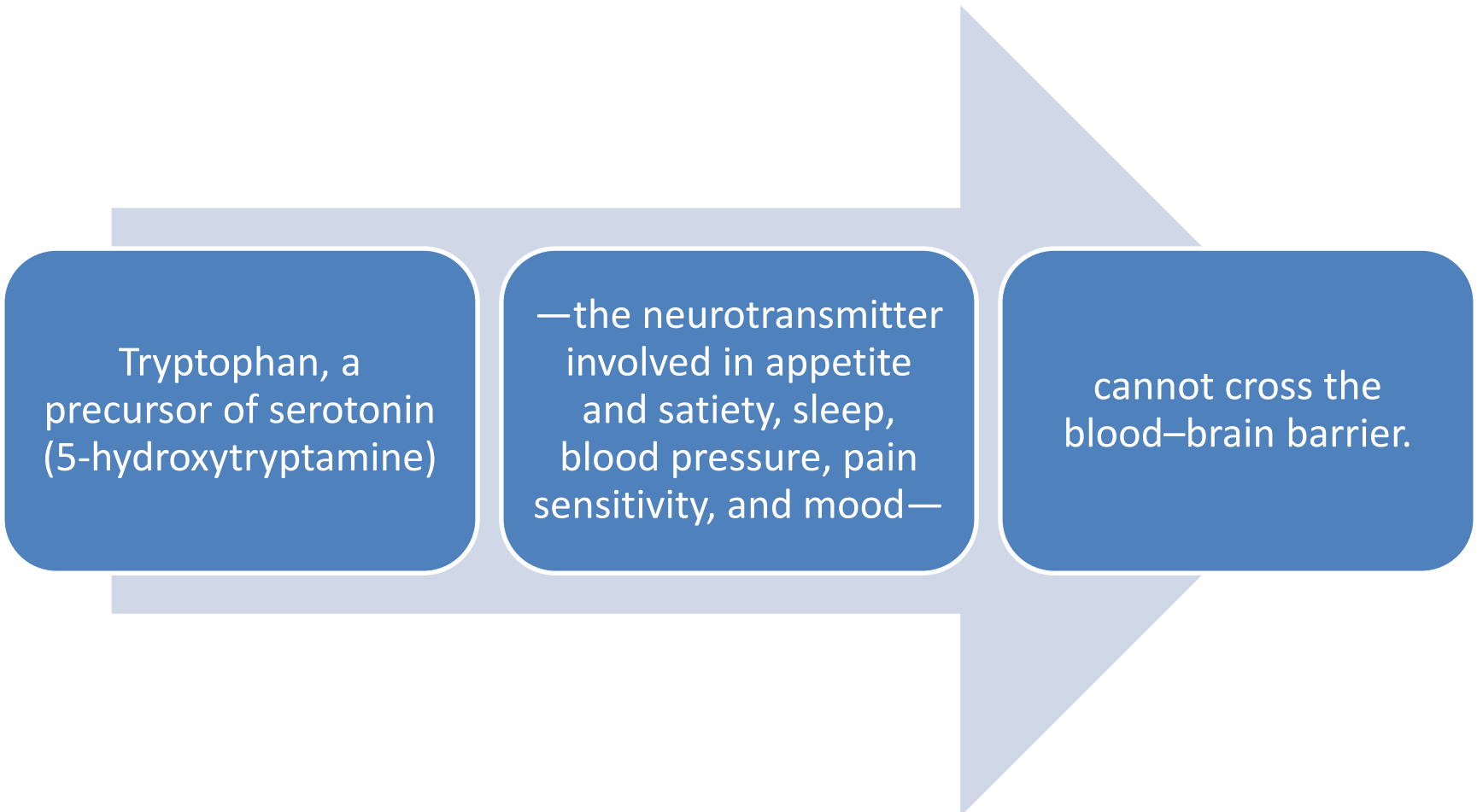




# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

dietary supply of amino acids is needed to synthesize proteins and neurotransmitters in the nervous system

# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION



Tryptophan, a precursor of serotonin (5-hydroxytryptamine)

—the neurotransmitter involved in appetite and satiety, sleep, blood pressure, pain sensitivity, and mood—

cannot cross the blood–brain barrier.

# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

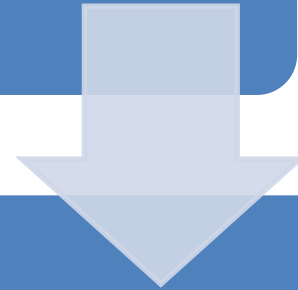
Metabolically active brain sites such as hippocampus, basal ganglia, and hypothalamus are particularly sensitive to



The effects of malnutrition, loss of energy, and amino acid supply

# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

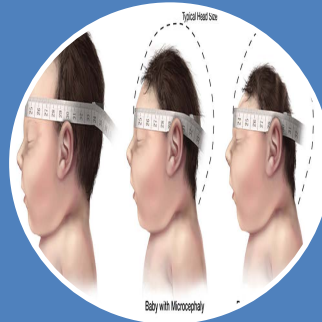
Neurons and glia are formed  
and begin migration by 22  
weeks of gestation;



and by late pregnancy,  
marked axonal and neural  
proliferation result in  
substantial brain growth.



# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION



Early malnutrition also affects processes involved in brain maturation such as neurogenesis, neuronal and glial migration, number of synapses, and degree of myelination.



# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

Lower IQ and more severe learning difficulties result in

worse school performance

higher school desertion

lower enrollment in higher education institutions

# NUTRITION AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION

Maternal milk contains lipids that promote brain maturation

The brain is 60% structural lipid and depends on dietary lipids

Lack of both linoleic acid and  $\alpha$ -linolenic acid (ALA) is incompatible with life

Arachidonic acid and docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) are large contributors to non-myelin membranes and must be provided by the diet

# Micronutrient deficiencies

vitamins, fat-soluble as well as water-soluble, and trace elements (minerals)

Essentially used as cofactors for enzymes engaged in various biochemical reactions

Iron, vitamin A, zinc and iodine   
vitamin C and the vitamin B complex

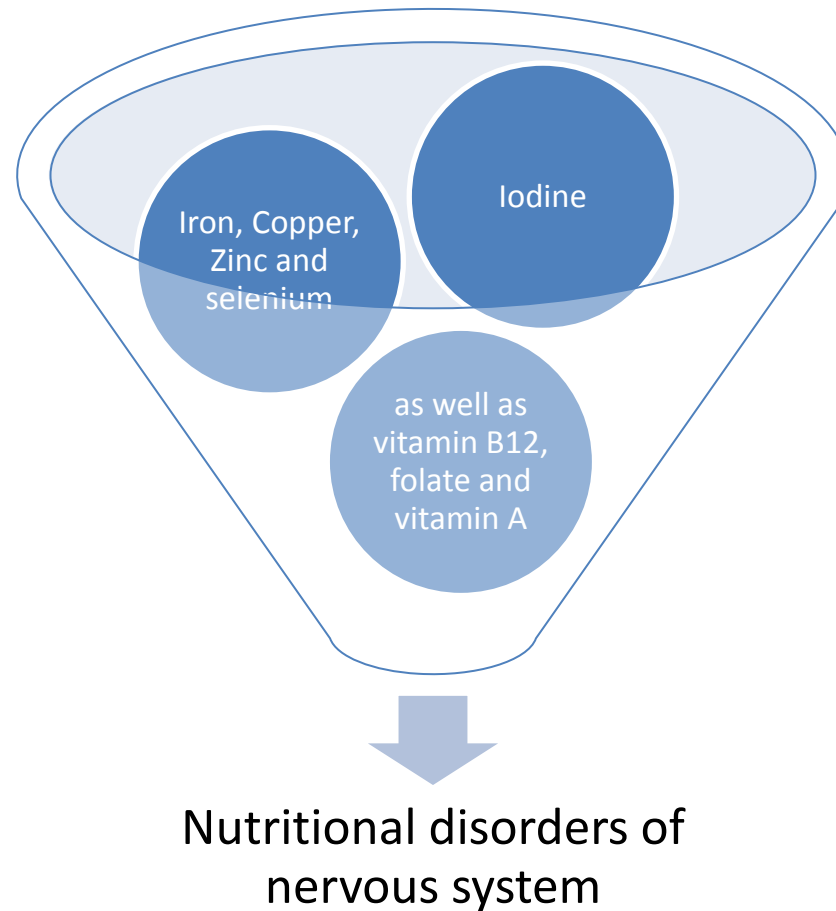
# Micronutrient deficiencies

From the public health viewpoint, iodine is the most important micronutrient for the prevention of brain disorders

causing lower intellectual functioning, psychomotor delay, and mental retardation



# Micronutrient deficiencies



# Iodine Deficiency Disorders



endemic  
cretinism



goiter

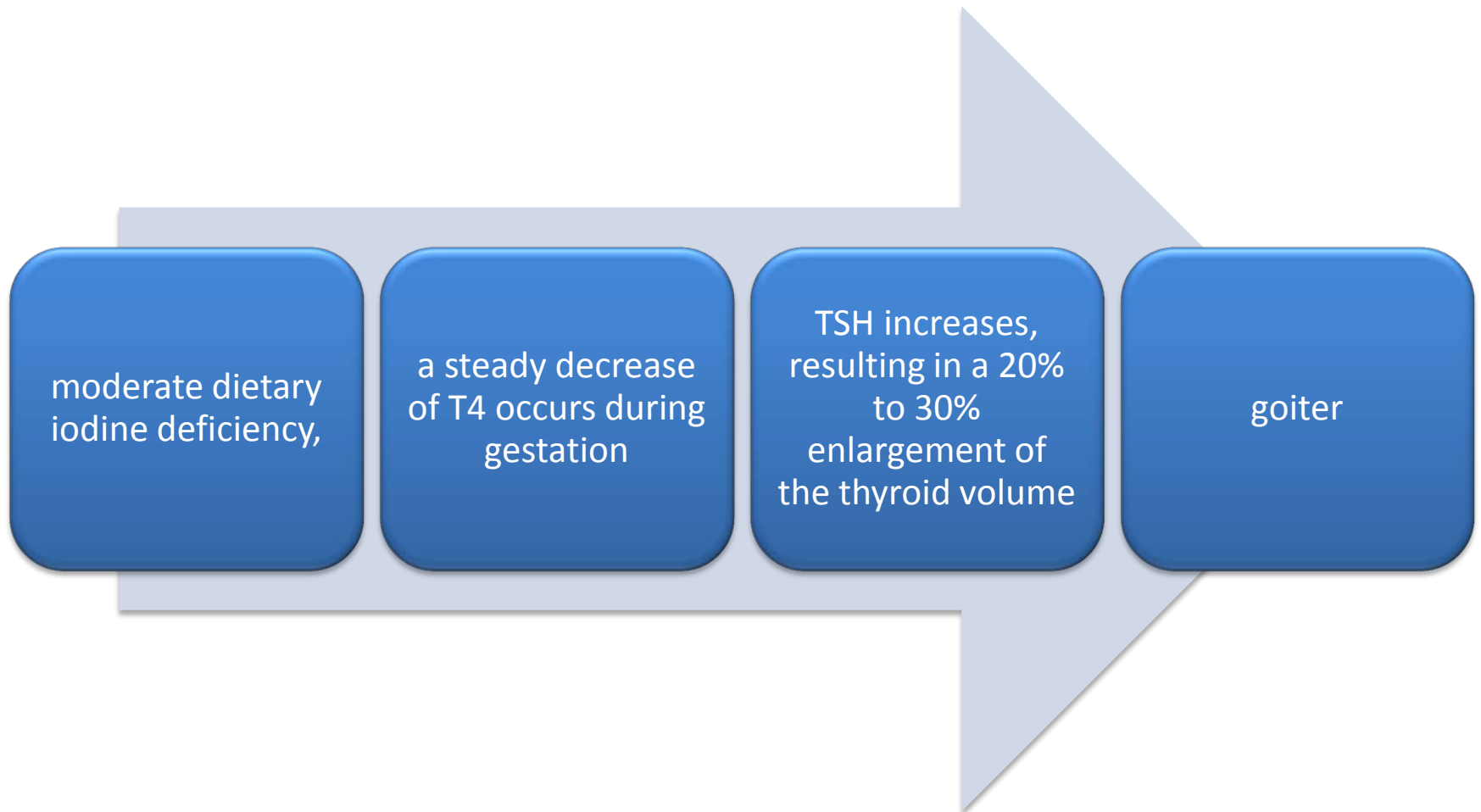


short stature



deafness

# Iodine Deficiency Disorders





In areas with moderate iodine deficiency (iodine ingestion 20 to 49 g/day), people have definite abnormalities of

Psychomotor and intellectual development including

- lower IQ,
- slower visual-motor performance,
- loss of fine-motor skill,
- Deficits in perceptual and neuromotor abilities,
- apathy,
- and low developmental quotients

# Endemic Cretinism and Other Forms of Iodine Deficiency Disorders

Endemic cretinism is different from congenital hypothyroidism, which occurs in 1 in 3500 newborns

Congenital hypothyroidism results from deficient thyroid function in the fetus and the newborn, resulting from endocrine factors unrelated to dietary iodine deficiency

# Endemic Cretinism and Other Forms of Iodine Deficiency Disorders

Both forms of endemic cretinism (neurologic and myxedematous) represent the most severe degree of brain damage from in utero maternal and fetal hypothyroidism

Thiocyanate toxicity from cassava consumption plays a role in myxedematous endemic cretinism.

# Thiocyanate Toxicity

- cassava, Spanish, *yam*, *sweet potato*, *corn*, *millet*, *bamboo shoots*, and *beans*
- *Tobacco smoke*

Foods containing large amounts of cyanogenic glycosides include





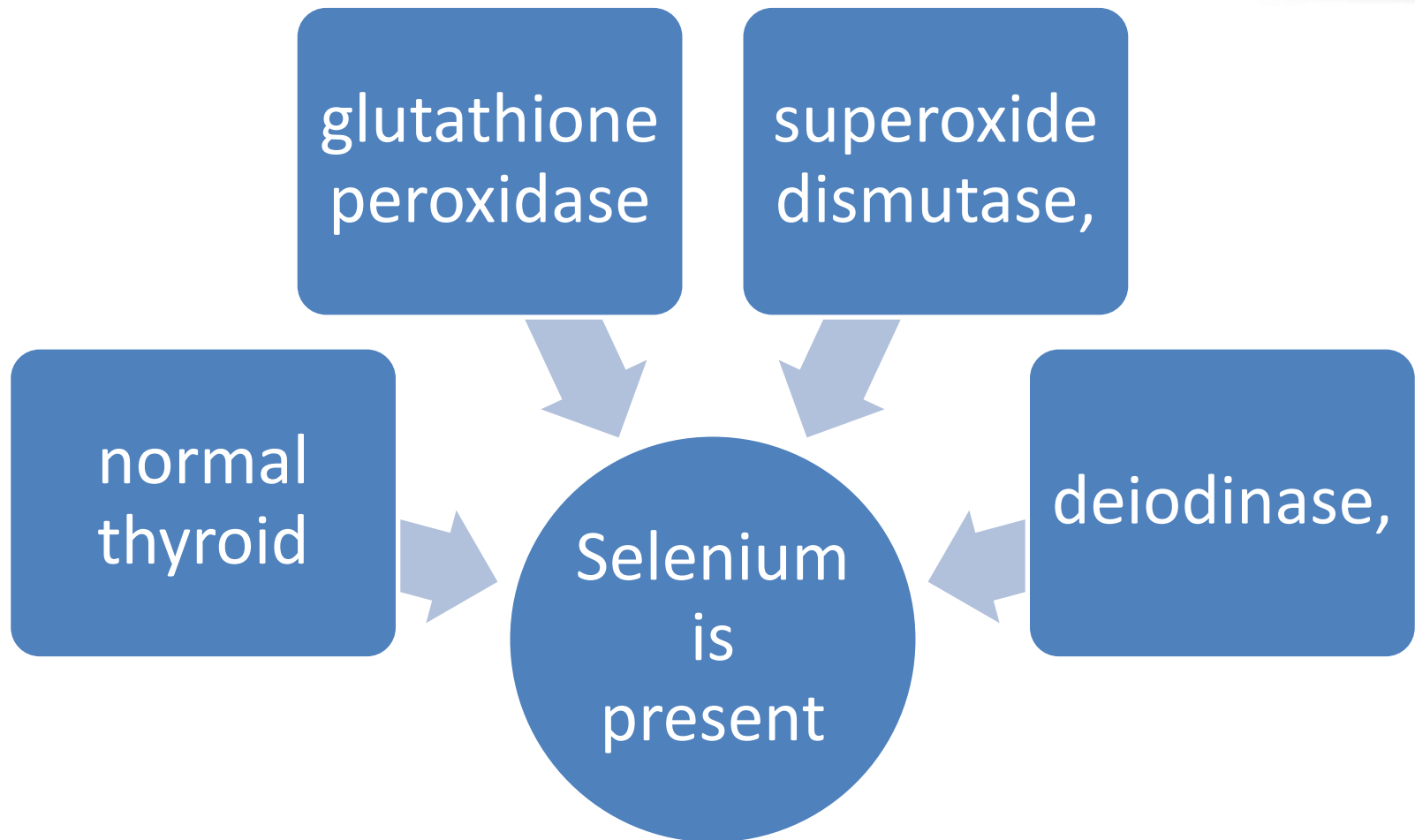
cassava  
goitrogenic

it inhibits thyroid  
peroxidase and prevents  
the incorporation of  
iodine into thyroglobulin

Thiocyanate may also form thiourea

These mechanisms explain the damaging  
neurologic effects of cyanide, diets poor in sulfur-  
containing amino acids, and low dietary iodine  
intake

# Selenium



# Pathogenesis of Brain Lesions Induced by Iodine Deficiency

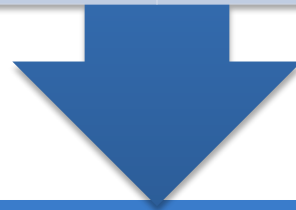
Thyroid hormones affect

neuronal  
differentiation,

migration,

neural  
networking, and

synaptogenesis



Through binding of T3 to nuclear receptors  
regulating gene expression in different brain  
regions

# Treatment and Prevention



iodized oil



iodized salt



# Cognitive Effects of Iron Deficiency



Both iron deficiency anemia and excessive iron accumulation in the brain are associated with neurologic disturbances

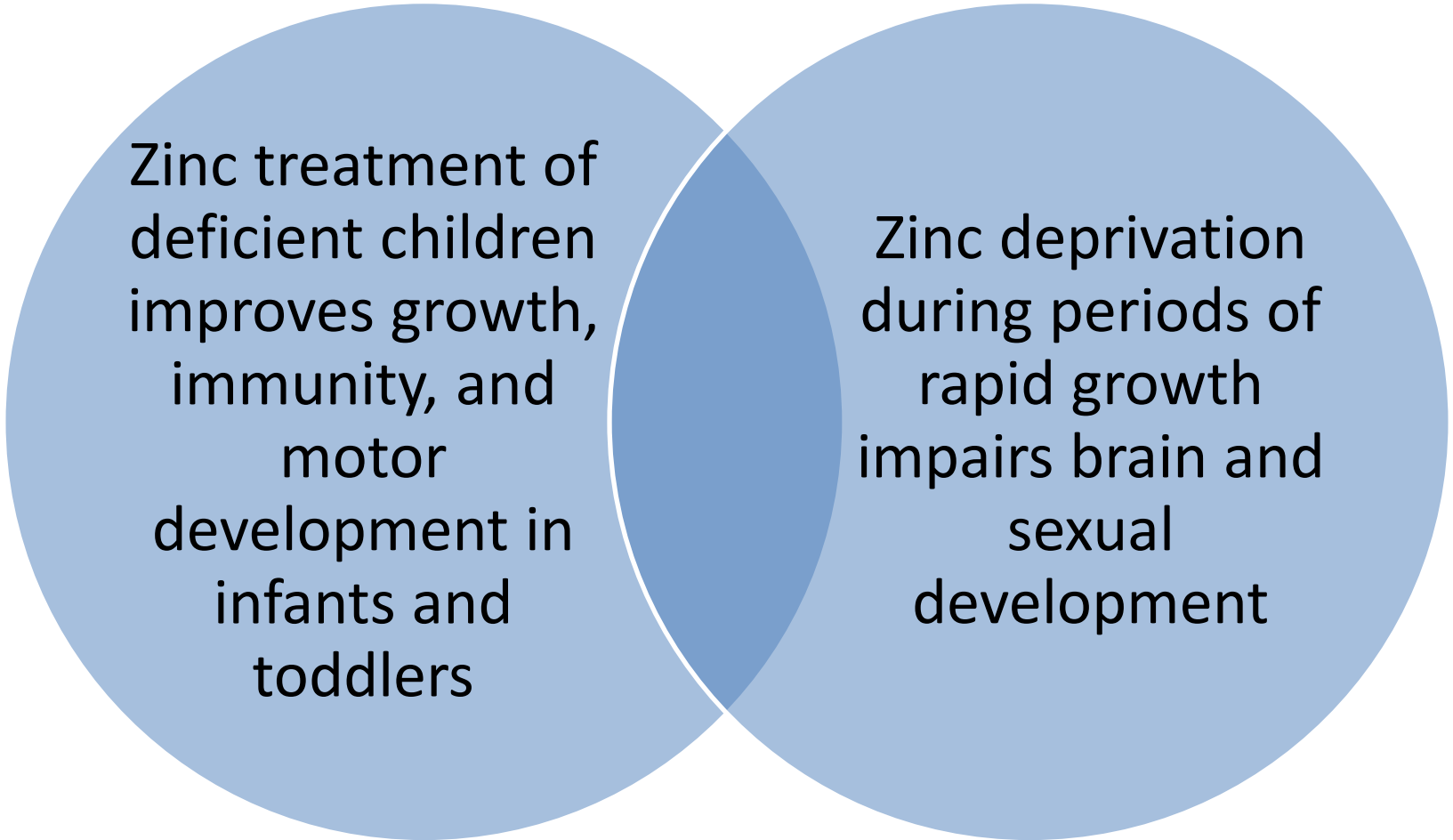


# Cognitive Effects of Iron Deficiency

anemic children usually have poor cognition and lower school achievement than non-anemic Children

With aging, there is accumulation of iron-containing molecules in the brain, particularly in Alzheimer and Parkinson diseases, perhaps caused by enhanced generation of reactive oxygen species (ROS) and higher neuronal vulnerability

# Cognitive Effects of Zinc Deficiency



A Venn diagram consisting of two overlapping light blue circles. The left circle contains text about the benefits of zinc treatment, and the right circle contains text about the negative effects of zinc deprivation. The overlapping area in the center is a darker shade of blue.

Zinc treatment of deficient children improves growth, immunity, and motor development in infants and toddlers

Zinc deprivation during periods of rapid growth impairs brain and sexual development

# Neurologic Effects of Copper Deficiency

Copper is  
an  
essential  
cofactor  
for  
numerous  
enzymes

- copper-zinc superoxide dismutase,
- Ceruloplasmin ferroxidase,
- cytochrome oxidase.

# Neurologic Effects of Copper

Menkes  
disease

*MNK*

- *ATP7A*
- *Low Cu*

Wilson  
disease

*WND*

- *ATP7B*
- *High Cu*

# NUTRITIONAL NEUROPATHIES AND MYELONEUROPATHIES



Alcohol play a secondary neurotoxic role, but it also displaces food in the diet, increases the metabolic demands for B-group vitamins, and decreases absorption of thiamin, folic acid, and liposoluble vitamins because of impaired pancreatic function

# Cuban Epidemic Neuropathy

caused by nutritional deficiencies  
produced by

- poor diets resulting from political and economic problems
- Deficit of B vitamins (B12) + lack of essential sulfur containing amino acids and carotenoids such as lycopene in the diet
- Cigar smoking and alcohol

TABLE 95.1

**CLINICAL SYNDROMES OBSERVED  
DURING THE EPIDEMIC OF NUTRITIONAL  
NEUROPATHY IN CUBA AND  
POSSIBLE CAUSES**

CLINICAL MANIFESTATIONS	POSSIBLE CAUSE
Optic neuropathy	
Decreased visual acuity	Folate-vitamin B <sub>12</sub> deficiency
Cecocentral scotoma	and methanol
Dyschromatopsia	Cyanide
Dorsolateral myelopathy	
Proprioceptive loss	Vitamin B <sub>12</sub> deficiency
Pyramidal tract weakness	
Sensorineural deafness	
High-frequency (4–8 kHz) loss	Folate-vitamin B <sub>12</sub> deficiency
Peripheral neuropathy	
Stocking-and-glove sensory loss	Thiamin deficiency
Areflexia	
Burning feet	Deficiencies of niacin, pantothenic acid, thiamin, and pyridoxine
Myeloneuropathy	Multivitamin deficiency including vitamin E



# NEUROLOGIC DISORDERS ASSOCIATED WITH SPECIFIC VITAMINS

Vitamin A

Vitamin  
B1

Vitamin  
B2

Vitamin  
B3

Vitamin  
B6

Vitamin  
B12

Folic Acid

# Vitamin A Deficiency



night blindness



conjunctival xerosis



Bitot spots



corneal xerosis that may lead to corneal ulceration and keratomalacia

# Vitamin A Intoxication



cleft palate,



harelip,



macroglossia,



eye  
abnormalities,



hydrocephalus.

# Vitamin B1 (Thiamin)



The main manifestations of thiamin deficiency are a sensorimotor axonal peripheral neuropathy (dry beriberi)

and a cardiac form (Shoshin beriberi) also called wet beriberi because of edema secondary to congestive heart failure

# Vitamin B2 (Riboflavin)



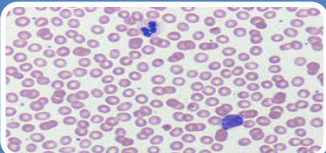
angular cheilosis



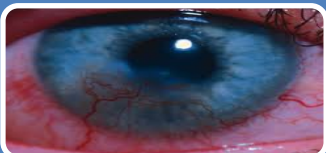
glossitis (beefy-red tongue)



scaling dermatitis



normochromic normocytic anemia



superficial interstitial keratitis

# Niacin Deficiency

Pellagra occurs among patients with

malnourished populations that consume corn (maize) as staple food.

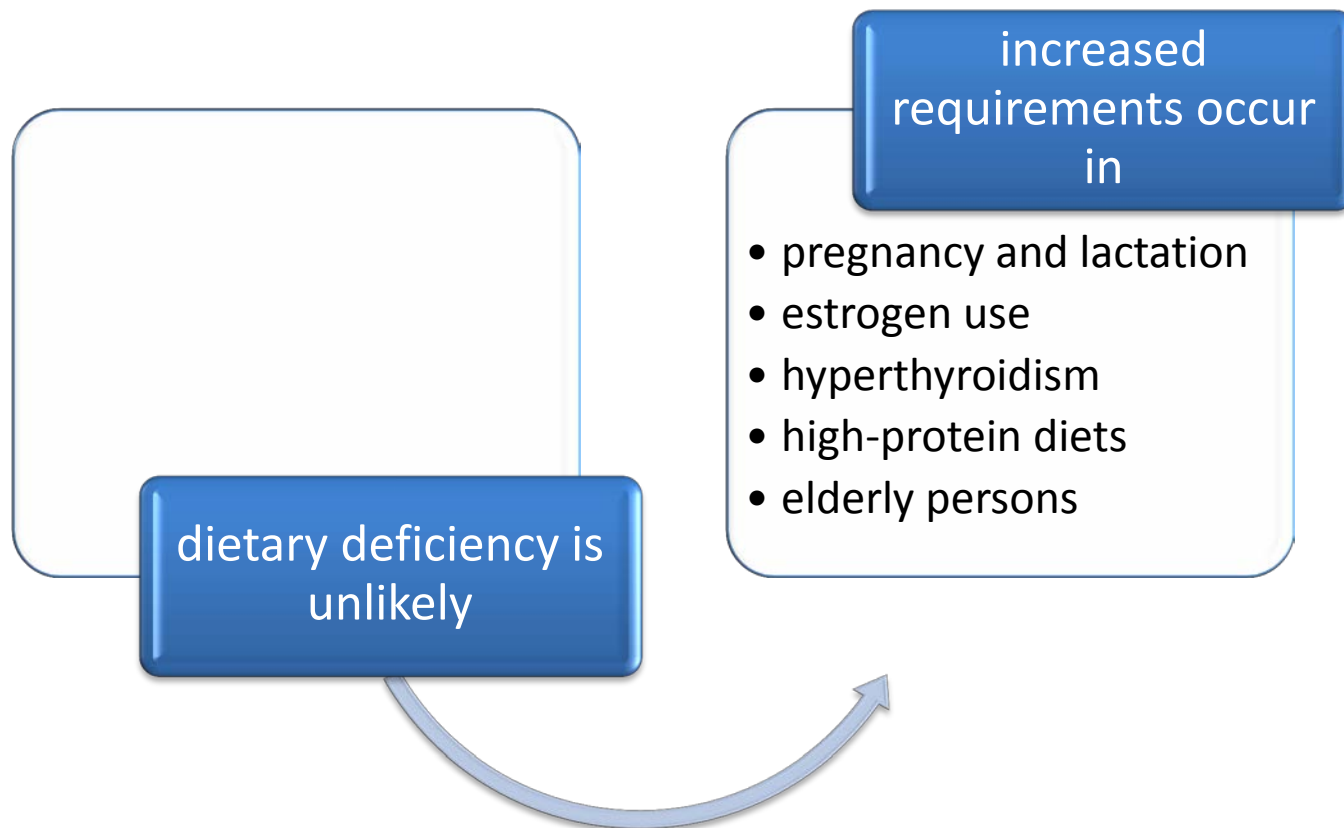
- Alcoholism
- malabsorption syndromes
- chronic diseases

# Vitamin B6

Vitamin B6 - three  
natural forms

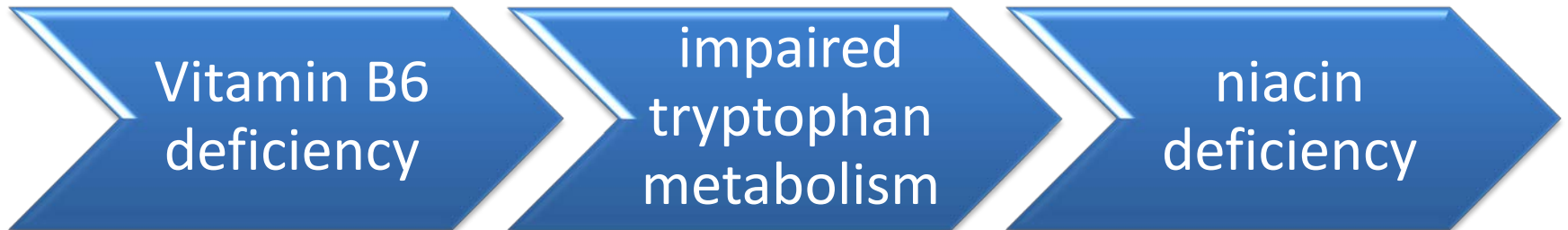
- pyridoxol
- Pyridoxal
- pyridoxamine

# Vitamin B6 Deficiency





# Vitamin B6 Deficiency



# Vitamin B6 Deficiency


infantile  
seizures

Faulty  
preparation  
of formula

neonatal  
seizures

Mothers  
deficient in  
vitamin B

# Vitamin B6 Deficiency



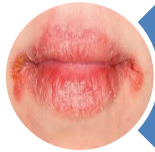
The clinical manifestations of pyridoxine deficiency resulting from use of the antagonist desoxypyridoxine include

- seborrheic dermatitis
- angular cheilosis
- glossitis
- peripheral neuropathy
- convulsions.

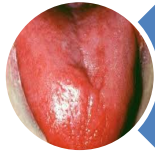
# Vitamin B6 Deficiency



seborrheic dermatitis



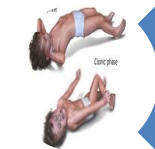
angular cheilosis



glossitis



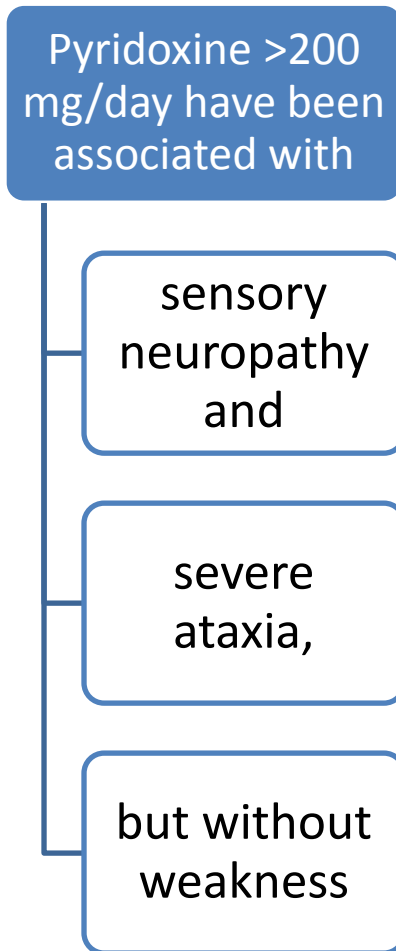
peripheral neuropathy



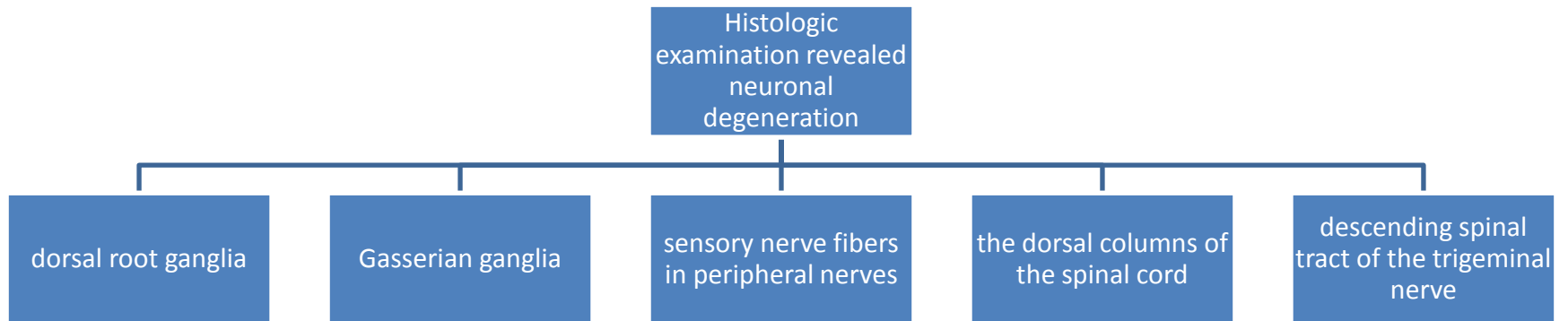
convulsions



# Vitamin B6 Intoxication



# Vitamin B6 Intoxication

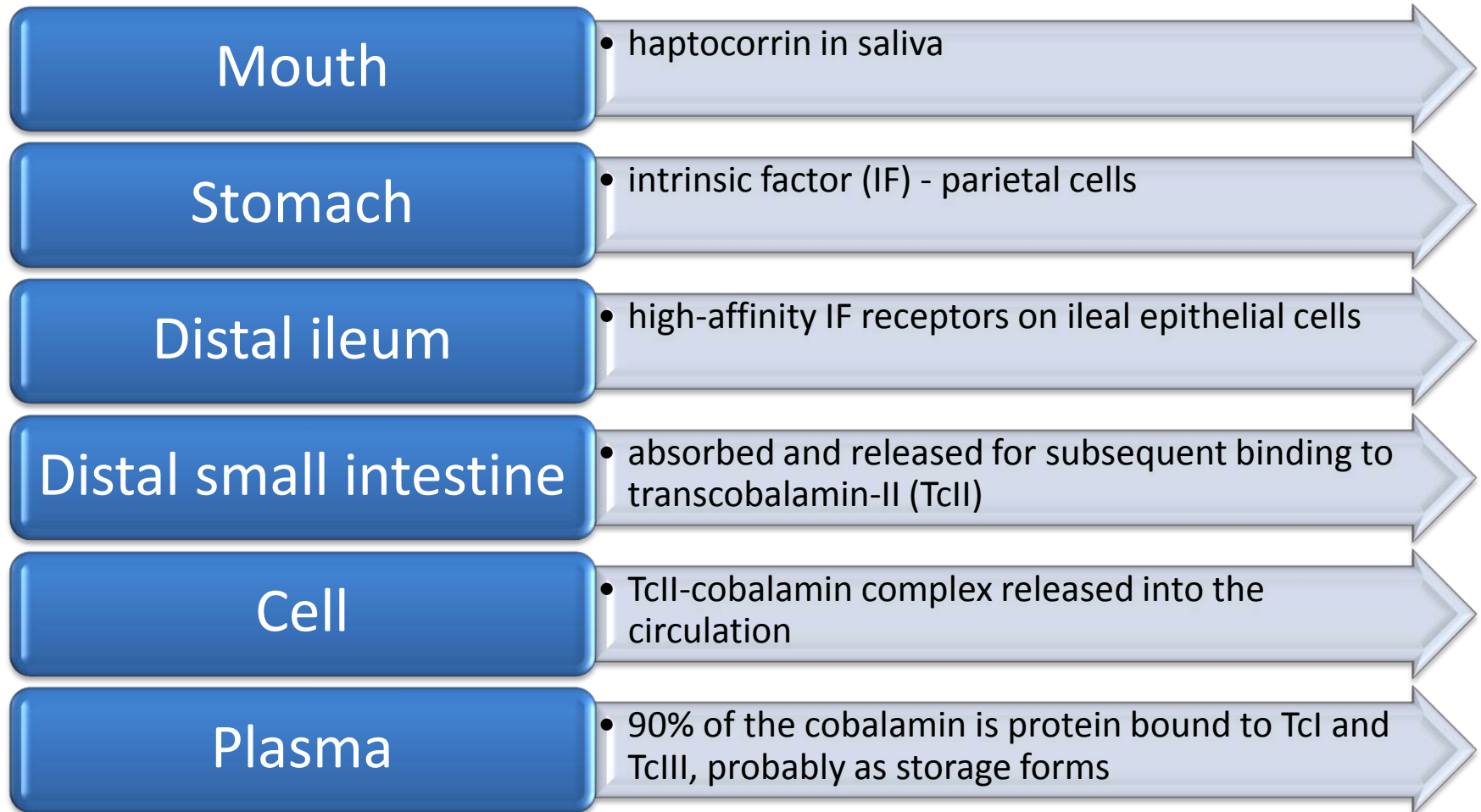


# Vitamin B12 (Cobalamin)

Cobalamin absorption involves at least five separate

- cobalamin-binding molecules,
- receptors, and
- transporters



# Vitamin B12 (Cobalamin)





# Pathogenesis of Cobalamin Deficiency

Cobalamin deficiency impairs conversion of

- L-methylmalonyl CoA  succinyl CoA 
- Methylmalonic acid (MMA)
- impairs *methylation reactions*,
- *no* synthesis of methionine,
- synthesis of *S-adenosyl methionine (SAM)*
- synthesis of neurotransmitters
  - norepinephrine
  - glutamate,
- myelin synthesis

# Treatment

intramuscular injections of 1000 g of vitamin B12 daily for 5 days to replenish the stores,

followed by monthly injections of 500 to 1000 g indefinitely

A sublingual form of vitamin B12 is also available.

For preventive treatment, oral preparations of vitamin B12 appear to be adequate

# Folic Acid

5-  
methyltetrahydrofolate  
(5MH4F)

enters the  
circulation

Acceptors of one-  
carbon fragments for  
the synthesis of

purines

methionine

deoxythymidine  
monophosphate for the  
synthesis of

DNA

# Neurologic Manifestations of Folate Deficiency

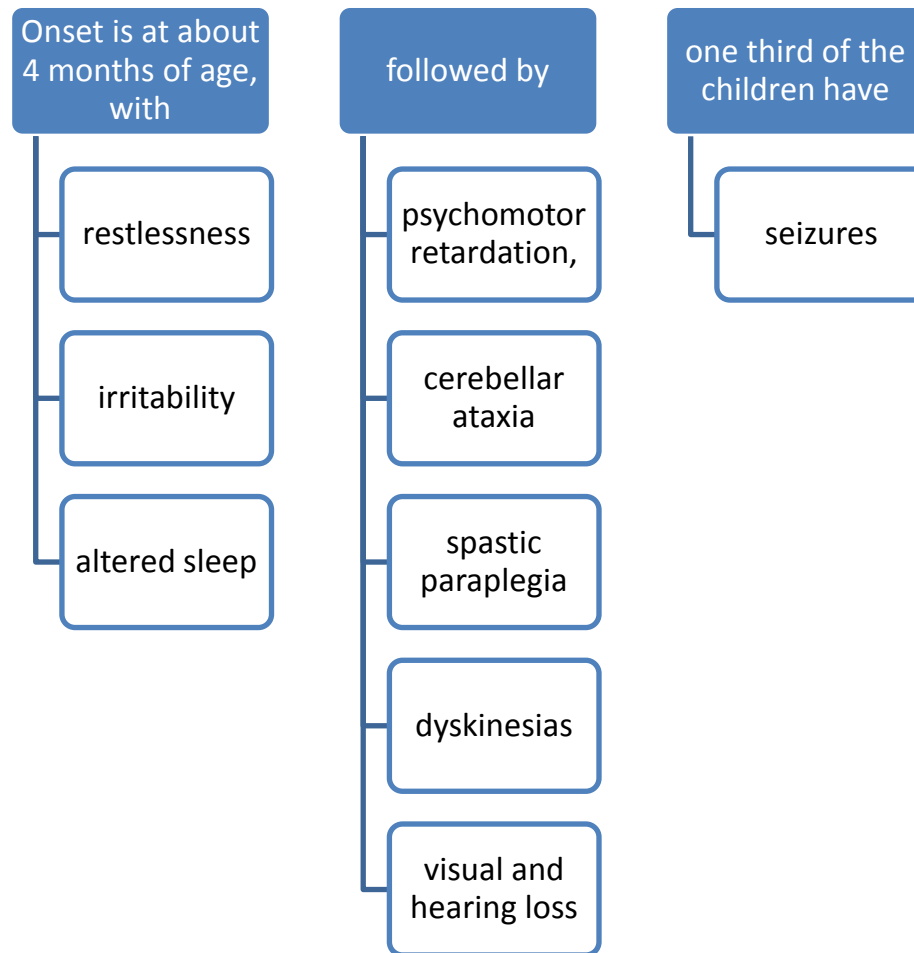
Neurologic syndrome in children

idiopathic cerebral folate deficiency

low CSF levels of 5MH4F

Normal folate metabolism outside the nervous system

# Neurologic Manifestations of Folate Deficiency



# DIETARY AND VITAMIN TREATMENT IN NEUROLOGY

Numerous neurologic conditions, ranging from migraine, stroke, and hepatic encephalopathy to rare metabolic disturbances

- respond to dietary treatment or to specific vitamins



# Migraine

Avoid

- ice-cold foods
- hypoglycemia
- nitrates,
- monosodium glutamate,
- biogenic amines, in particular tyramine and phenylethylamine

# **Mediterranean Diet**

The generic name of the typical diet of people living in the olive-growing areas of the Mediterranean basin



# Mediterranean Diet

**TABLE 95.3**

## **GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN DIETS**

1. Abundant plant foods (fruits, vegetables, breads, other forms of cereals, beans, nuts, and seeds)
2. Minimally processed, seasonally fresh, and locally grown foods
3. Fresh fruits as the typical daily dessert; sweets based on nuts, olive oil, and concentrated sugars or honey consumed during festive days
4. Olive oil as the principal source of dietary lipids
5. Dairy products (mainly cheese and yogurt) consumed in low to moderate amounts
6. Fewer than four eggs consumed per week
7. Red meat consumed in low frequency and amounts; fish consumption changing according to region
8. Wine consumed in low to moderate amounts, generally with meals

---

Adapted with permission from Serra-Majem L, Román B, Estruch R. Scientific evidence of interventions using the Mediterranean diet: a systematic review. *Nutr Rev* 2006;64:527–47.

# Mediterranean Diet

lowers risk for

- cardiovascular disease,
- myocardial and cardiovascular mortality
- stroke,
- obesity,
- arthritis,
- cancer,
- Alzheimer disease

useful public health approach to prevent

- Stroke
- cognitive dysfunction

# Stroke

## Decrease the intake of

- saturated animal fats
- *trans-fats*
- *sodium (to control hypertension, hyperlipidemia, and body mass index)*

## The DASH diet (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension diet)

- lowering the dietary intake to 150, 100, or 50 mmol/day of sodium, according to the severity of hypertension and to increase consumption of fruits, juices and vegetables

## Mediterranean diet

- excellent dietary approach to stroke prevention



# Orthostatic Hypotension

To increase the circulating volume

increase their sodium intake to 150 to 250 mEq/day of sodium (10 to 20 g of salt)

raise their oral fluid intake to 20 oz/day,

along with high potassium supplementation when they are taking fludrocortisone

**SUMMARISE**







## Fitness Tip

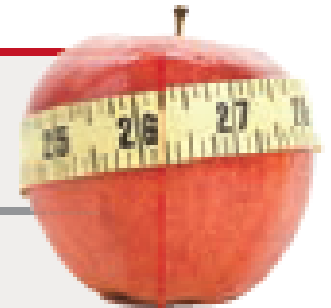
---

A pound of body fat is equal to 3500 calories. If you eat 100 calories more than you expend every day, you will gain more than 10 pounds in a year.

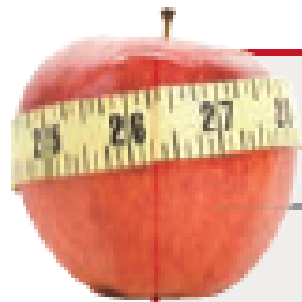


## Wellness Tip

---



Research shows that some protein-rich foods can give you a quick mental boost, which can be helpful before an exam.



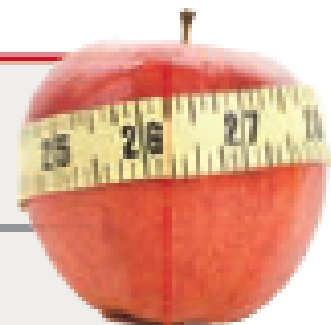
## Wellness Tip

---

Certain carbohydrate-rich foods, such as a bagel or a plain baked potato, can have a temporary calming effect on some people during stressful situations.

## Wellness Tip

To avoid intestinal discomfort, add fiber to your diet slowly so you can build a tolerance to it.

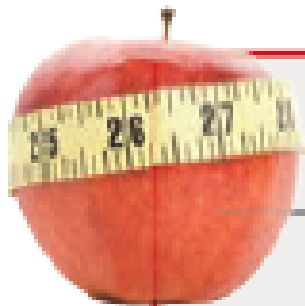




## Fitness Tip

---

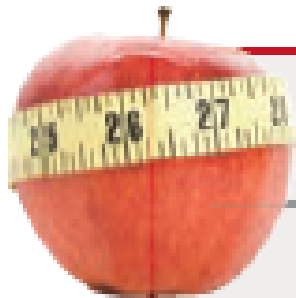
Drink plenty of water before, during, and after workouts, especially when the weather is warm. Proper hydration helps you avoid cramps and heat-related problems such as heat stroke.



## Wellness Tip

---

If you take a supplement, *never* take more than the recommended dosage unless your doctor tells you to.



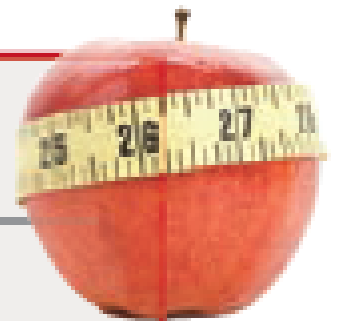
## Wellness Tip

---

About a dozen major American cities, and the entire state of California, have enacted laws restricting the use of trans fats in commercially prepared foods.

## Wellness Tip

---



To get produce as clean as possible, rub it with a soft brush while holding it under running water.

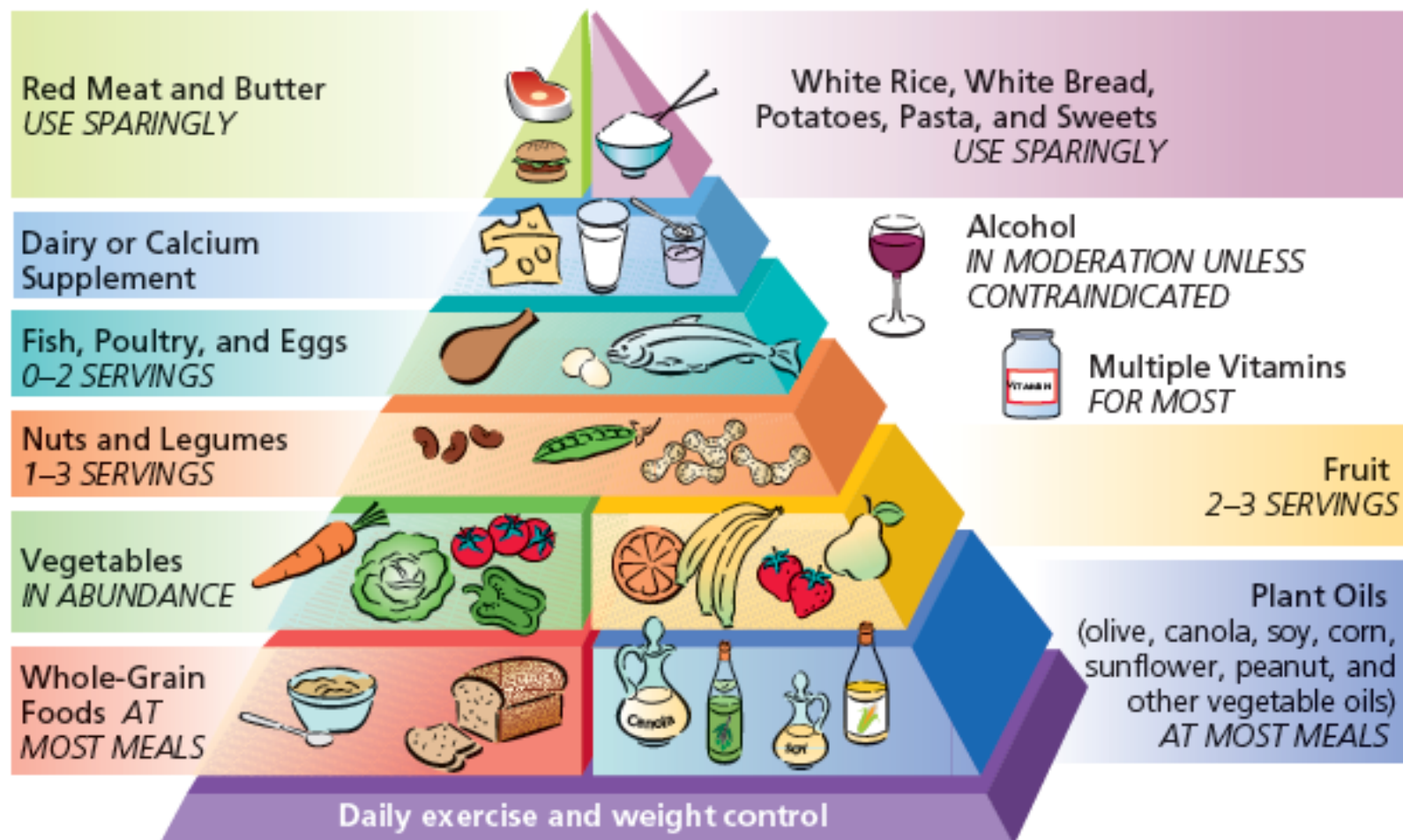
## Fitness Tip

---



Consumption of red meats, sweets, eggs, and butter is greatly reduced or eliminated entirely in most forms of the Mediterranean diet.





Be happy and stay blessed!

