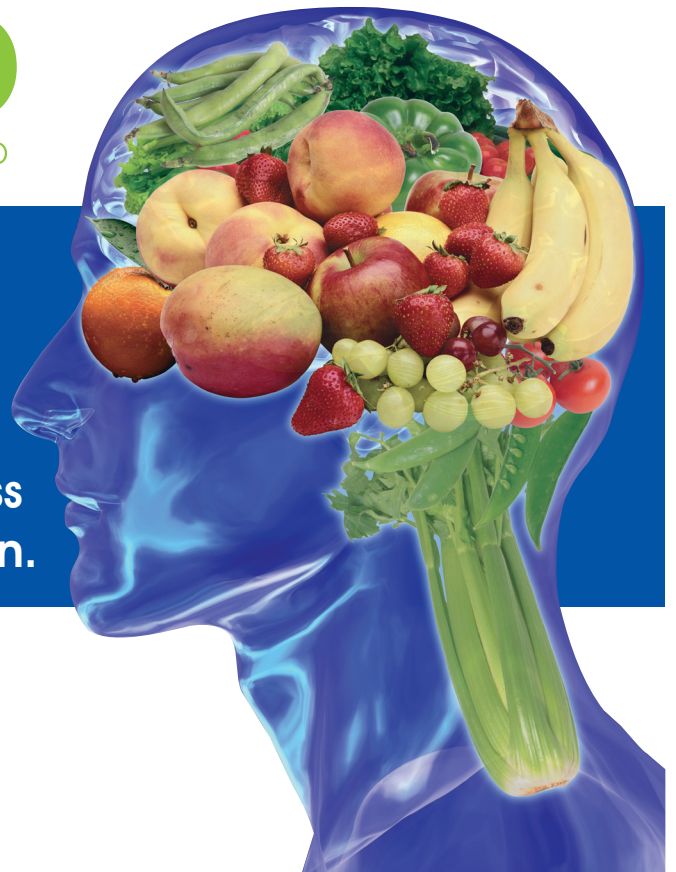


Depression is one of the most prevalent and disabling disorders in the EU. MooDFOOD is one of the largest consortia investigating depression, and the first to address the role of nutrition in its prevention.



ABOUT:

Depression is one of the most prevalent and disabling disorders in the EU*

Lifetime prevalence of depression varies from 10% to 25% in women, with an average prevalence of 20%. For men, the lifetime prevalence is 5% to 12% with an average of 10%. About 6% of the population meets the criteria for major depressive disorder at any time, placing a heavy burden on individuals and their families.

Possible link between nutrition and psychological health

Recent studies suggest a bi-directional link between healthy nutrition and psychological health (Akbaraly et al. 2009; Sanchez-Villegas et al. 2009; Jacka et al. 2010). It is yet unclear whether nutritional behaviour influences the development of depression in a direct manner or whether other mechanisms like social environment or obesity are also involved as well (Luppino et al. 2010). These potential mechanisms need to be addressed (Joint Programming Initiative 2012) to assess their impact on depression rates.

"In MooDFOOD European scientists from several disciplines will work together to unravel the mystery of the relation between nutrition and depression. That is a great challenge!"

Ingeborg Brouwer
VU University Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Obesity rates are increasing in Europe

Current obesity rates range between 8.0%-23.9% for women and 7.6%-24.7% in men - among the 19 Member States (Eurostat 2011). MooDFOOD will investigate how food intake, nutrient status, food-related behaviour and obesity are linked to the development of depression.

"Through the MooDFOOD project we will take advantage of the wealth of data collected in excellent cohort studies across Europe by using these data to explore novel pathways through which nutrition may influence depression."

Marjolein Visser
VU University – VUMC Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

EU funding for nutrition depression link

On January 1, 2014, the MooDFOOD project led by Marjolein Visser and Ingeborg Brouwer of the Department of Health Sciences from the VU University started. It has been granted nearly €9 million to investigate over 5 years how food intake, nutrient status, food-related behaviour and obesity are linked to the development of depression. This will allow researchers to combine existing high quality data from longitudinal prospective European cohort studies with new data from surveys, short-term experiments and a long-term preventative intervention study.

"Intuitively, we can all sense a link between food and mood. The time has come to gather scientific data to clarify this relationship. This is where MooDFOOD comes in."

Patricia Boulos
EFICOM (France)

A multi-country collaborative project

MoodFOOD is multidisciplinary consortium involving 13 organizations in 9 European countries, using a unique integrative approach which combines expertise in nutrition, consumer behaviour, psychiatry and preventive psychology.

"This is a unique opportunity to be involved with groups of excellence in a project of a great impact in two European major public health concerns: depression and overweight."

Miquel Roca
University of the Balearic Islands (Spain)

PARTNERS:

- VUA** VU UNIVERSITY-VUMC AMSTERDAM (NED)
- UCL** UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON (UK)
- ASF** AZIENDA SANITARIA FLORENCE (ITA)
- UI** UNIVERSITY OF ICELAND (ICE)
- AMC** AMC MEDICAL RESEARCH (NED)
- AU** AARHUS UNIVERSITY (DEN)
- GGZ** GGZ INGEEEST (NED)
- UNEXE** THE UNIVERSITY OF EXETER (UK)
- IUB** UNIVERSITY OF BALEARIC ISLANDS (SPA)
- ULEI** LEIPZIG UNIVERSITY (GER)
- EFICOM** EFICOM MARKETUDES SARL (FRA)
- EASO** EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF OBESITY (UK)
- EAAD** EUROPEAN ALLIANCE AGAINST DEPRESSION (GER)
- GAMIAN** GLOBAL ALLIANCE OF MENTAL ILLNESS ADVOCACY NETWORKS EUROPE (BEL)

KEY CONTACTS:

Website: www.moodfood-vu.eu

Coordinators: Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam, Netherlands

Dr. Ingeborg Brouwer PhD
ingeborg.brouwer@vu.nl

Prof. Marjolein Visser PhD
m.visser@vu.nl

PROJECT OFFICE:

Mieke Cabout

Assistant Project Manager MoodFOOD
Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam
Faculty of Earth and Life Sciences
Department Nutrition and Health, Room O-547
Boelelaan 1085, 1081 HV Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel. +31 20 5986942
mieke.cabout@vu.nl

MoodFOOD consortium aims:

- 1) to gain a better understanding of psychological, lifestyle and environmental pathways underlying the multi-faceted, bidirectional links of food intake, nutrient status, food-related behaviour and obesity with depression
- 2) to develop and disseminate innovative evidence-based, feasible, effective and sustainable nutritional strategies for the prevention of clinical depression.
- 3) to transform these nutritional strategies into guidelines and create practical tools to guide policy at EU- and Member State levels.

"Hopefully, at the end of the project we can provide some evidence-based advice on food choices and eating practices that promote mental well-being in Europe."

Liisa Lätteenmäki
Aarhus University (Denmark)

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KEY DATA:

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Project Number: 613598