

# NUTRITION *and* MENTAL HEALTH & ILLNESS



## Mental health

A state of well-being of the mind, including feelings and emotions which can fluctuate depending on external circumstances.

## Mental illness

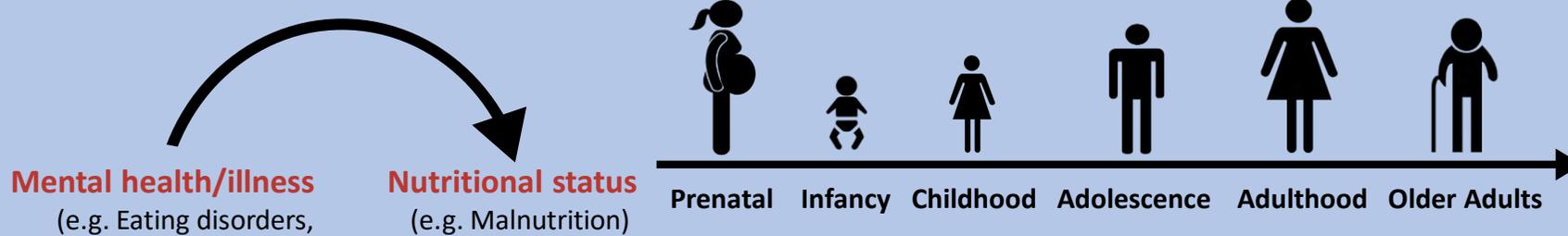
A medically diagnosable condition that affects a person's ability to function over a long period of time.

VS

Mental health problems and mental illness are on the rise



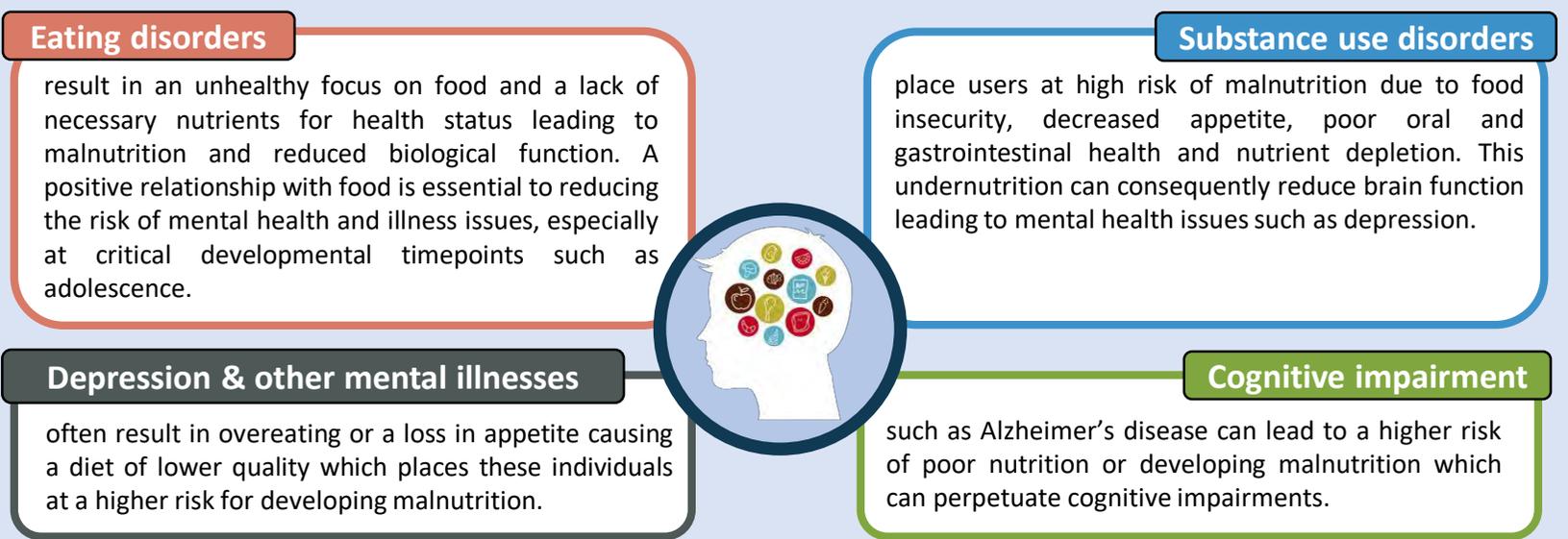
## Nutritional status plays a significant role in mental health across the lifespan



**Nutrition is a critical factor for brain health**

*Did you know?* The brain has the hungriest cells in the body and is only 2% of the body's weight, but uses 20% of food energy.

## How are mental health and illness connected to nutrition status?



## How can nutrition support good mental health?



Eat a healthy and balanced diet



Eat vegetables, fruit, whole grains, nuts, fish and lean meats



Limit foods high in sugar, saturated fat and sodium

**Sources**  
 1. World Health Organization. [https://www.who.int/mental\\_health/en/](https://www.who.int/mental_health/en/) (accessed March 16, 2020).  
 2. Epp J, "Mental health for Canadians: Striking a balance," Health & Welfare Canada (1988).  
 All vector images are courtesy of Freepik. Infographic content and design by Amber Hutchinson, MSc and Shirin Panahi, PhD.

Based on the 2020 Thematic Conference: Mental Health Across the Lifespan

