



MENTAL HEALTH MONDAYS



Key Takeaways – May 4, 2020 | 6 p.m.

Dr. Jose Colon, Adult and Pediatric Sleep Medicine Specialist

“Kids in the Kitchen: The benefits of healthy cooking on physical and mental health”

1. **How to get your kids to eat healthy.** It’s been shown that when you get your children involved in the kitchen, they’re happier about the foods they eat and will eat more vegetables. You can also introduce more colorful foods. Kids have a greater tendency to enjoy food when it’s colorful.
2. **How to get your kids involved in the kitchen.** It’s great when you are able to purchase a \$5 or \$6 kitchen tool to make cooking more fun for your children. When cooking is fun, they’re more willing to want to be involved in the kitchen. If your child is interested in cooking, be sure to be mindful of the tools and utensils they’re using. For example, I believe that serrated knives are a little easier for kids to use since they are longer and have a bigger surface area. Kids can slip and accidentally cut themselves when they use smaller sharp knives.
3. **Everyday foods that are great for your brain and your body:**
 - a. **Bell peppers of all colors have a lot of benefits.** Bell peppers contain vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. They also contain Vitamin B-6, which is essential to making your own brain neurotransmitters such as norepinephrine, serotonin, and melatonin.
 - b. **Berries are really rich in antioxidants and very good for your brain.**
 - c. **Oranges have great Vitamin C, which is good for the immune system, which we all need right now.**
 - d. **Turmeric and a broad variety of other spices are good for your mental health and for decreasing inflammation.**
 - e. **Avocados are high in omega-3s, which is great brain food.**
 - f. **Cilantro helps decrease anxiety.** It is a powerful anti-inflammatory. When you extract the juice, it has been shown to have properties that can decrease anxiety.
 - g. **Vegetables have vital nutrients that are good for your brain.**
 - h. **Bone broth has a little bit of protein and good flavoring. It’s also good for your gut since it contains glutamate.**

Questions from viewers:

Q: Do you think it's best to buy all organic produce, free-range, antibiotic-free, or grass fed?

A: Whenever you're able to, it's always best to buy organic, antibiotic free, and if meat, grass fed. If it contains antibiotics, it can affect our gut and our microbiome, and if there are hormones, we and our kids can absorb them. When it comes to the fat content in meat, if it's not grass fed, it can be more inflammatory. On top of that, overall, it's important to balance the amount of veggies and meats that we eat, so anything that we can do to increase our vegetable intake is very helpful.

Q: What kind of pans are okay or not okay to use?

A: We try to avoid Teflon pans or pans that advertise as non-stick because they put a coating on the pans that are not safe. Cast iron is another great type of pan to use which take a special cleaning method and soap. For the kids, we use the GreenPans.

Q: Are there certain seasonings and spices that are beneficial for your mental and emotional health?

A: A lot of spices are very good. We keep an array of spices. One of my favorite spices is turmeric. Turmeric has Vitamin C and is anti-inflammatory. A lot of beauty products now use turmeric as well because it calms redness, brightens, and is great for anti-aging.

Q: How young do you think you can start a child using a knife?

A: I don't have the exact answer to this, but the youngest competitor on Chopped Food Network is 9 years old, and recalls being in the kitchen at 3 years old. Don't start with a knife though, start with some common sense stuff. If a child can wave a magic wand, they can stir in the kitchen. If a child can collect dirt and play with sand, they can mix ground beef. At any age, a child can tear snap peas. If a child can use a pair of scissors to snip their hair, they can use scissors to cut snow peas or red bell peppers. If they're using a knife to cut their own food, then you may be able to incorporate knives into the kitchen as well. There isn't a magic age; it's more about development and how you work with them.

Q: Do you use salt much?

A: When you're able to use different herbs and spices for flavoring, you will be able to decrease salt intake.

Recipes Shared:

Chicken & Peppers for Tacos

Ingredients and supplies used: Chicken breasts, orange peppers, yellow peppers, red peppers, avocado oil, lemon, pepper, chili powder, smoked paprika, cooking pan, spoon, rubber tongs

Steps to create dish-

1. Cut chicken breast into thin slices. Put to the side.



2. Dice peppers. Put to the side.
3. Add avocado oil into a warm pan.
4. Add peppers and chicken to the pan.
5. Add lemon juice, smoked paprika, chili powder seasoning, and pepper to the chicken and peppers. Mix.
6. Cover with lid.
7. Mix contents. *Note:* Use spoon to mix when the chicken breast is still pink colored or raw. Use the tongs to mix the chicken and peppers once the chicken breast is cooked through. This will help prevent cross-contamination.
8. Remove from pan once the chicken is cooked through.

Purple Cauliflower Dish

Ingredients and supplies needed: Purple cauliflower, bone broth, olive oil, cooking pan

Steps to create dish-

1. Take purple cauliflower and remove stems. Put into warm pan.
2. Pour bone broth into pan.
3. Cover with lid and let it steam.
4. Once it's cooked through, add a drizzle of olive oil.

Jada's fruit salad

Ingredients and supplies needed: Oranges, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, strawberries, oranges (peeled and cut), big serving bowl

Steps to create dish-

1. Cut and dice apples, oranges, and strawberries.
2. Add all of the diced fruit to the serving bowl.
3. Mix all of the fruits together with a serving spoon or with clean hands.
4. *Optional* – Add a scoop of vanilla ice cream or dark chocolate shavings for extra sweetness.





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About Kids' Minds Matter

The goal of Kids' Minds Matter is to raise awareness about the need for pediatric mental and behavioral health care services and to raise the funds required to make these services available in the region through Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida and Lee Health. An estimated 46,000 Southwest Florida children are impacted by mental and behavioral health disorders like anxiety, depression, eating disorders, psychosis, substance abuse, autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. As part of the region's strategic solution to the children's mental and behavioral health epidemic in Southwest Florida, Kids' Minds Matter is dedicated to fostering partnerships that support existing services, identifying and filling gaps in the continuum of care, and innovating new treatments.

Philanthropic support for Kids' Minds Matter has allowed Lee Health and Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida to: implement a tiered model of care that clinically aligns community, inpatient and outpatient care; hire additional psychiatrists, child advocates and other mental health professionals; offer Mental Health First Aid training to local pediatricians, emergency service providers and others who work directly with children; renovate an outpatient center in Fort Myers where a child's needs can be addressed in a therapeutic setting; and launch a first-of-its-kind Pediatric Digital Cognitive Behavioral Health diagnostic and treatment protocols interlaced with Tele-Psychology support to treat anxiety, depression and trauma. Most recently, Kids' Minds Matter introduced mental health care navigators into Lee and Collier County schools who will help families find resources and care to address their child's mental healthcare needs.

The "Mental Health Mondays" segments are a public forum, designed for open discussions that benefit a large audience, and to provide real-time resources and advice from pediatric mental health professionals and advocates. The information shared on this platform is intended for general public consumption and not intended for individual treatment. The views, advice, and resources shared by each guest speaker are solely their own and are not endorsed by Lee Health, Golisano Children's Hospital of Southwest Florida and Kids' Minds Matter. Kids' Minds Matter is dedicated to raising awareness and essential funding to enhance pediatric mental & behavioral health programs, services and access to care in Southwest Florida. To learn more about Kids' Minds Matter, visit [KidsMindsMatter.com](https://www.KidsMindsMatter.com).

