

# Building Physical Resilience

CONNECTING NUTRITION & MENTAL HEALTH  
FOR PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL



---

# Quick Brainstorm

What words come to mind when you see these foods?



---

The things *I know I should do*

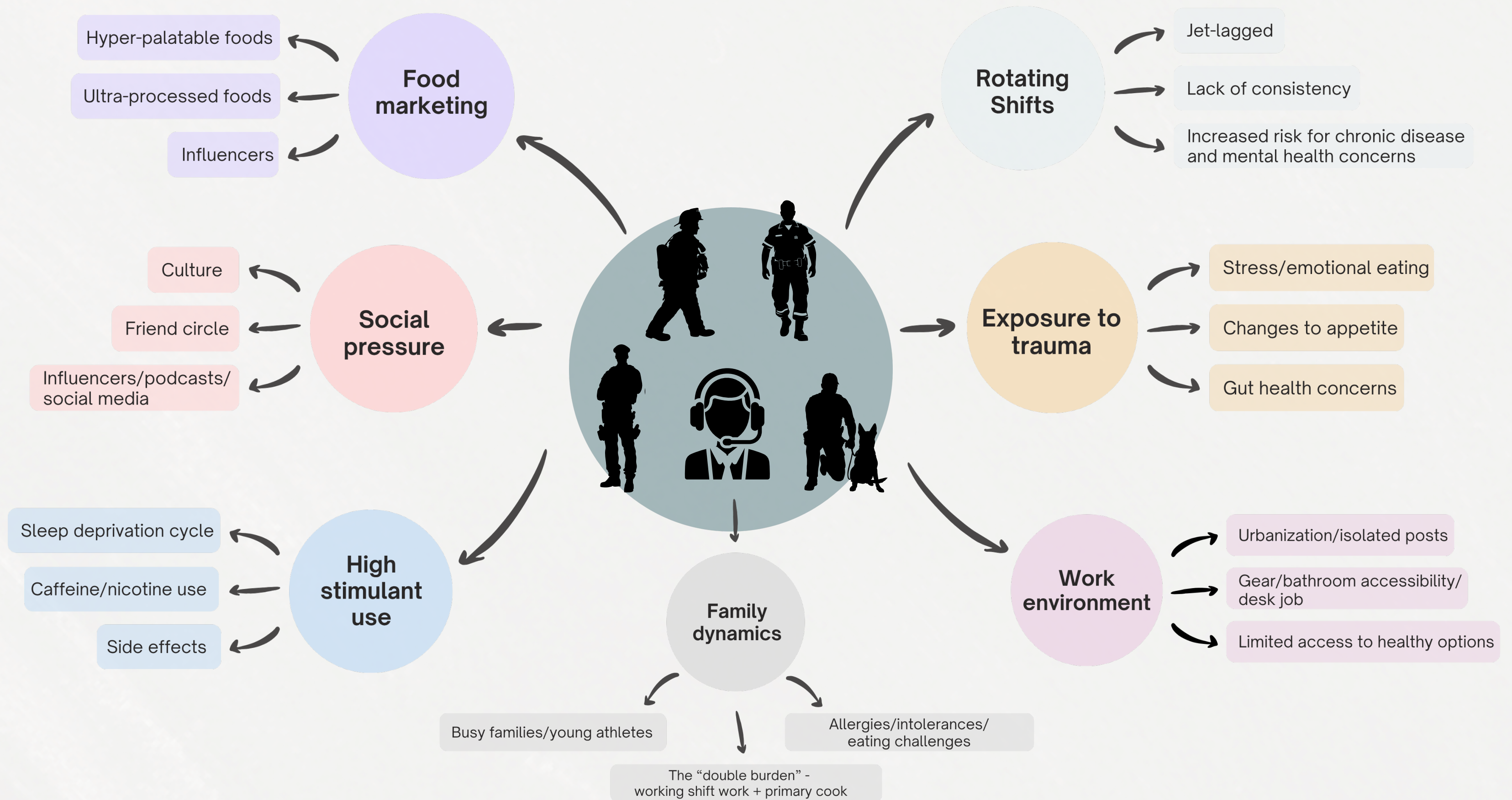
I don't do.

And the things I don't want to do –

those are the things *I end up doing*

– *Apostle Paul*

# — The PSPEnvironment



# Career Trajectory of a Law Enforcement Officer

Enter training  
Mentally healthier than average

Retirement  
PTSD, HTN, CVD, T2D, cancer

Promotion

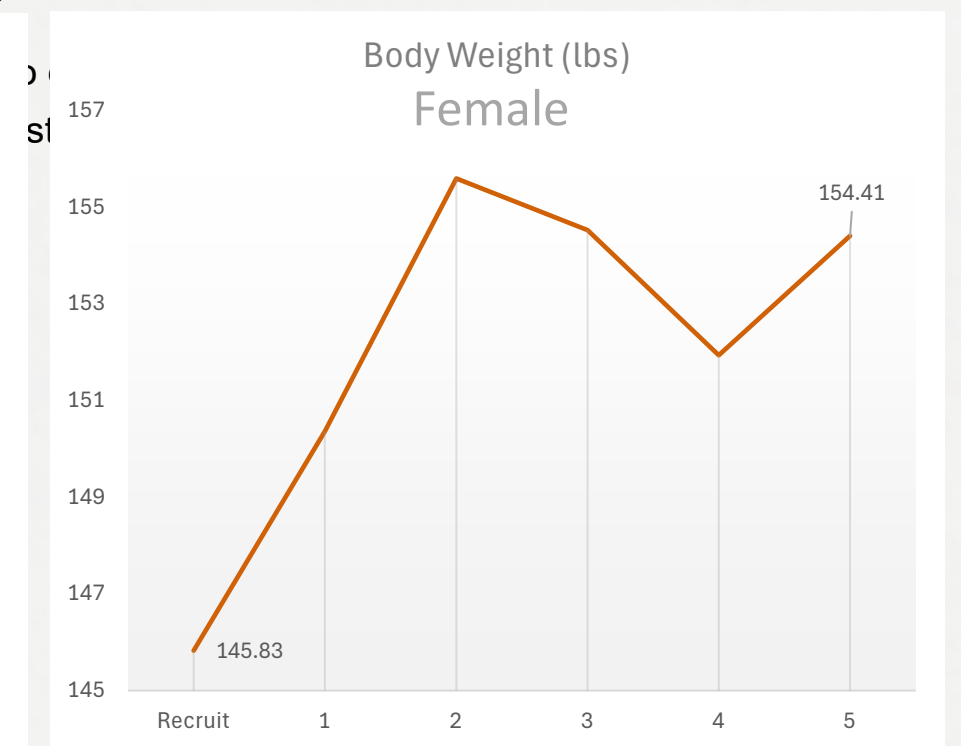
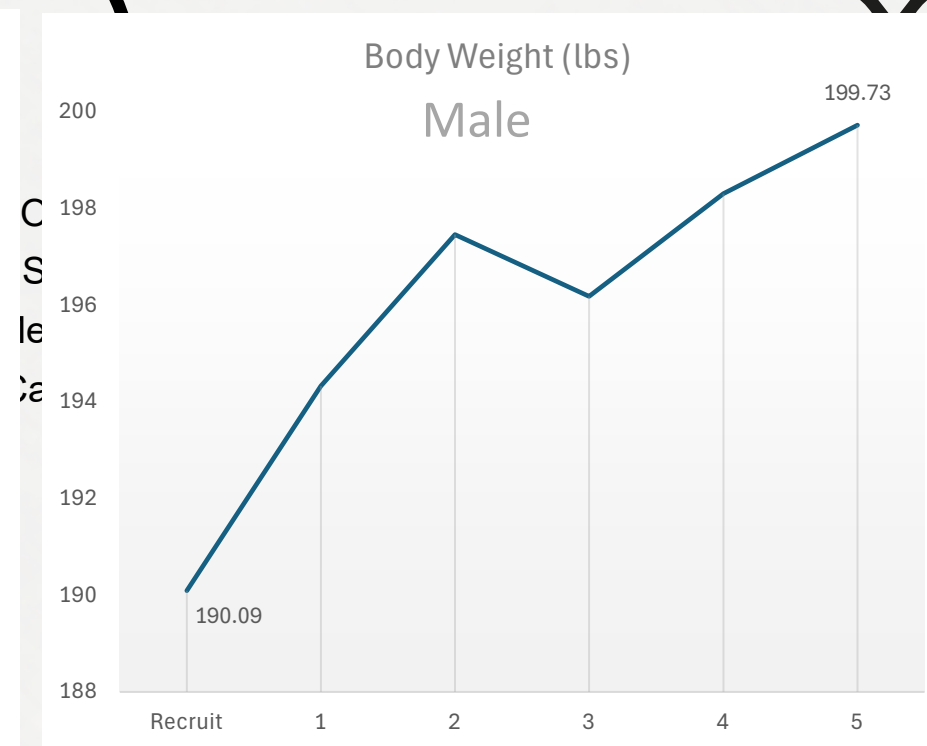
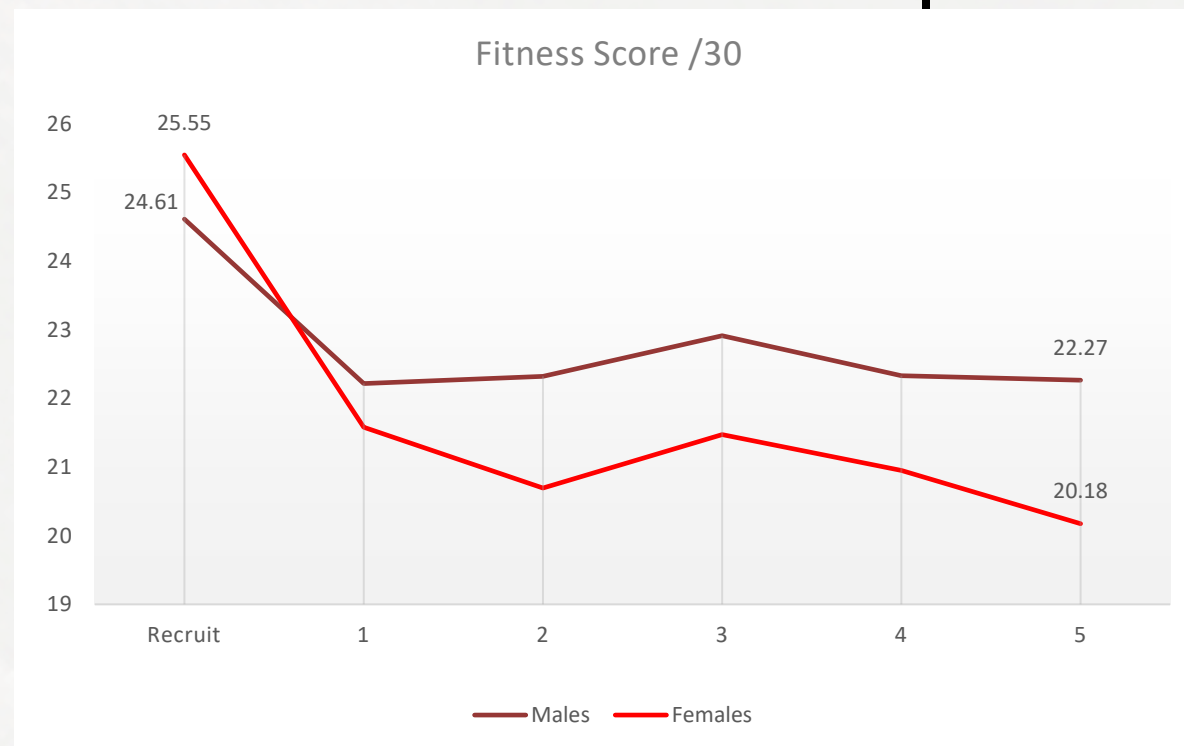
Promotion

Environmental inputs  
10-15 years of shift work, overtime, sleep deprivation, poor nutrition habits, stress and trauma



1 year

Trauma exposed  
Weight increases  
Fitness decreases



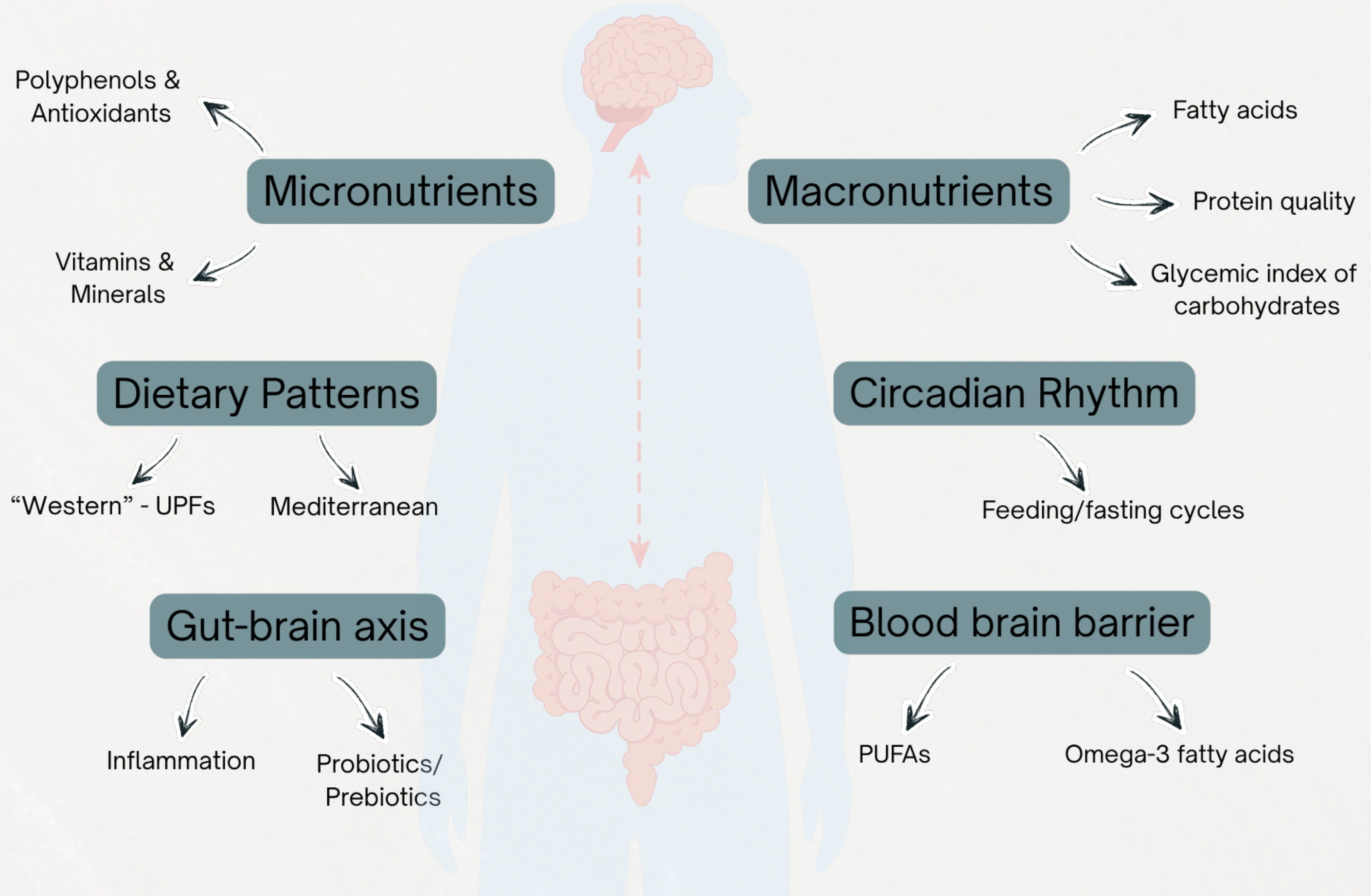
---

# What's being talked about in therapy?

The nutrition topics that show up in therapy according to clinicians and clients

- 1 Binge eating/food as a coping mechanism
- 2 Impact of medications
- 3 Food, mood, and stress hormones
- 4 Fatigue/lack of energy
- 5 Stimulants & sleep
- 6 Meal timing

# — *Connecting* Diet & Mental Health



# Key strategies to *improve mental health*



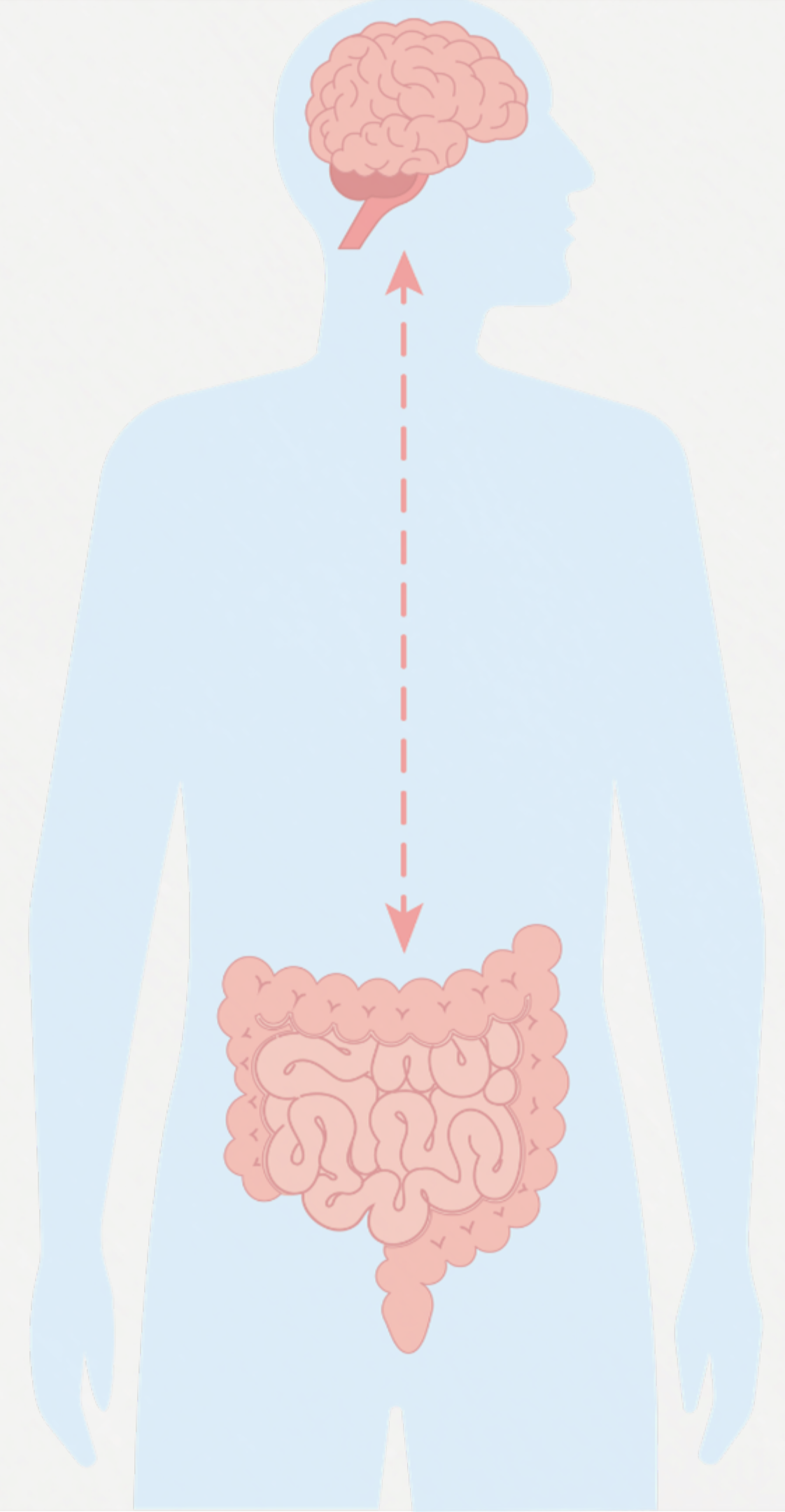
- 1 Gut health (probiotics/ fibre-rich foods)
- 2 Omega-3 rich foods/supplements
- 3 Mediterranean dietary pattern
- 4 Meal timing
- 5 Nutrient-dense grab-and-go options

---

# The connection is *real*.

The right dietary strategies:

- build physical resilience
- protect against PTSD, anxiety, and depression
- help manage stress
- improve the outcomes of therapy
- lower markers of inflammation
- impact your health over your whole career



# Start building physical resilience.

Increasing accessibility to shift work specific nutrition education and services.

1 Individual and family nutrition counseling

2 Nutrition resources & partnerships for mental health clinics

3 Integrated nutrition services for organizations



**We need you.**

THANK YOU!

**Raina Beugelink, BSc, RDN**

FOUNDER, SHIFT WORK NUTRITION

# References

1. Dietitians of Canada. The Role of Nutrition in Mental Health Promotion and Prevention (1). 2012. PDF. Accessed December 2025. <https://www.dietitians.ca/DietitiansOfCanada/media/Documents/Resources/Nutrition-and-Mental-Health-1.pdf?ext=.pdf>
2. Dietitians of Canada. The Role of Nutrition Care for Mental Health Conditions (2). 2012. PDF. Accessed December 2025. <https://www.dietitians.ca/DietitiansOfCanada/media/Documents/Resources/Nutrition-and-Mental-Health-2.pdf?ext=.pdf>
3. Dietitians of Canada. Nutrition and Mental Health: Therapeutic Approaches (3). 2012. PDF. Accessed December 2025. <https://www.dietitians.ca/DietitiansOfCanada/media/Documents/Resources/Nutrition-and-Mental-Health-3.pdf?ext=.pdf>
4. Fenton, Ashley & Neiling, Kathryne & Ndzi, Maureen & Goode, Colleen & Humphrey, Katherine. (2024). Nutrition for Mental Health: Guidance for Clinical Practice. The Journal for Nurse Practitioners. 20. 105209. 10.1016/j.nurpra.2024.105209.
5. Alberta Health Services. Nutrition and mental health: common practice questions. Nutrition Point of Care Reference. 2024. Accessed April 21, 2026. <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/info/nutrition/if-nfs-pocr-nutrition-mental-health-common-questions.pdf>
6. Alquraan L, Alzoubi KH, Hammad H, Rababa'h SY, Mayyas F. Omega-3 Fatty Acids Prevent Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder-Induced Memory Impairment. Biomolecules. 2019; 9(3):100. <https://doi.org/10.3390/biom9030100>
7. Lane MM, Gamage E, Travica N, et al. Ultra-processed food consumption and mental health: a systematic review and meta-analysis of observational studies. Nutrients. 2022;14(13):2568. doi:10.3390/nu14132568.
8. Grajek M, Krupa-Kotara K, Białek-Dratwa A, et al. Nutrition and mental health: a review of current knowledge about the impact of diet on mental health. Front Nutr. 2022;9:943998. doi:10.3389/fnut.2022.943998.
9. Firth J, Gangwisch JE, Borisini A, Wootton RE, Mayer EA. Food and mood: how do diet and nutrition affect mental wellbeing? BMJ. 2020 Jun 29;369:m2382. doi: 10.1136/bmj.m2382. Erratum in: BMJ. 2020 Nov 9;371:m4269. doi: 10.1136/bmj.m4269. PMID: 32601102; PMCID: PMC7322666.
10. Ventriglio A, Sancassiani F, Contu MP, Latorre M, Di Slavatore M, Fornaro M, et al. Mediterranean Diet and its Benefits on Health and Mental Health: A Literature Review. Vol. 16, Clinical practice and epidemiology in mental health : CP & EMH. United Arab Emirates; 2020. p. 156–64.

---

# References

11. Feng J, Zheng Y, Guo M, Ares I, Martínez M, Lopez-Torres B, et al. Oxidative stress, the blood-brain barrier and neurodegenerative diseases: The critical beneficial role of dietary antioxidants. *Acta Pharm Sin B*. 2023 Oct;13(10):3988–4024.
12. Klaus W. Lange, Omega-3 fatty acids and mental health, *Global Health Journal*, Volume 4, Issue 1, 2020, Pages 18-30, ISSN 2414-6447, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.glohj.2020.01.004>.
13. Khoury, J. M. B., Jamshidi, L., Shields, R. E., Nisbet, J., Afifi, T. O., Fletcher, A. J., Stewart, S. H., Asmundson, G. J. G., Sauer-Zavala. S., Krätzig, G. P., and Carleton, R. N. (2023) Putative risk and resiliency factors among Royal Canadian Mounted Police cadets. *Front. Psychol.* 14:1048573. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1048573. Article: Risk and resiliency among RCMP cadets. Accessed March 2026.
14. Samantha M. Riedy, Desta Fekedulegn, Bryan Vila, Michael Andrew, John M. Violanti, Shift work and overtime across a career in law enforcement: a 15-year study, *Policing: An International Journal*, Volume 44, Issue 2, 2020, Pages 200-212, ISSN 1363-951X, <https://doi.org/10.1108/PIJPSM-08-2020-0134>.
15. Andrews, K. L., Jamshidi, L., Nisbet, J., Brunet, A., Afifi, T. O., Asmundson, G. J. G., Fletcher, A. J., Maquire, K. Q., Teckchandani, T. A., Lix, L., Sauer-Zavala, S., Sareen, J., Keane, T. M., Carleton, R. N. Potentially Psychologically Traumatic Event Exposure Histories of new Royal Canadian Mounted Police Cadets. *The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*. 2023. doi/10.1177/07067437221149467. Article: Psychological Trauma Exposure Among RCMP Cadets. Accessed March 2026.
16. Edmonton Police Service – Fitness and Lifestyle Unit. Police Recruit 5 Year Trends 2019-2024. Presentation. Accessed April 2026.