"You Are What You Eat"

We all have heard this saying. Thought to have originated in 1826, by Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, who wrote *"Tell me what you eat and I will tell you what you are"*. Then it appeared again in 1863/4 by Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach, who wrote: *"man is what he eats"*. Neither Brillat-Savarin or Feuerbach meant their quotations to be taken literally. They were stating that the food one eats has a bearing on what one's state of mind and health will be.

We know that we are not *literally* what we eat, but there is a strong connection between what we put into our bodies and the effects it has on our physical and mental health. The food we eat provides more than just a source of energy for our muscles: complex carbohydrates power our brains, micronutrients (vitamins and minerals) are used throughout our bodies to facilitate essential cellular processes and help combat depression. The "good" fats (mono- and poly-unsaturated fats) can be broken down fairly quickly for energy while improving heart health.

In this day and age of cheap fast food and insta-meals, it can be difficult to balance nutritional needs with the demands of a high-tempo lifestyle. But if your body gets bogged down with high-fat, high-sugar, poor nutritional content fuels, you'll experience constant fatigue, low energy, difficulty concentrating, low motivation, sleep issues and even depression! Here are some recommendations for fueling your body to better support your health:

- **Hydrate.** American specifically are chronically dehydrated. We have access to a variety of sweet drinks that we choose over water everyday. A good rule of thumb for how much water we should be drinking in a 24 hour period, divide your weight in half and that number is the average amount of ounces we should be consuming in a day**. Weight 160lbs, divided in half = 80 ounces.**

- Make your plate colorful. Try to eat 4-5 fruits or vegetables each day. Most of us do a pretty good job of eating our daily share of proteins and carbohydrates. Fruits and veggies contain a ton of nutritional substances not found in meats and breads, particularly the nutrients our bodies cannot "produce" for themselves. Plus, they provide quicker energy than alternatives.

- **Moderation is key.** Let's be real, our food portion sizes are out of control. Unless you're exercising like an Olympic athlete, you only need about 2,000-2,500 calories daily to *maintain* your current weight. Any excessive calories—even from "healthy" foods—will be stored as fat!

When deciding what is right for your body, take inventory on how you are feeling or even performing. Are you feeling at your best, or could you make some changes to help your physical and mental health?

This reminder was provided by members of the Airman Resilience Team at the 363 ISRW