

Abstract

# Individual Resilience—Recent Elaborations on the Impact of Diet, Physical Activity and Sleep <sup>†</sup>

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**Abstract:** In the face of an external crisis like COVID-19, some people experience severe mental health issues whereas others remain healthy. Research on individual resilience is concerned with precisely this phenomenon. It investigates the underlying question of why some people remain healthy in the face of adversity and danger while others exposed to the same or similar circumstances are unable to maintain their mental health. Resilience can be taught and strengthened and is often promoted through psychological interventions, although these interventions are not necessarily effective for everyone. Studies suggest growing evidence for the relationship between certain lifestyle factors (diet, physical activity and sleep) and mental health, although an overview is lacking. Therefore, we aim to present the current state of knowledge on the influence of diet, physical activity and sleep on individual resilience. We conducted a rapid literature search on the PubMed database using relevant search terms. Studies were only included if resilience was assessed with a resilience scale. After the selection procedure, we included nine articles for individual resilience and diet, 17 for individual resilience and physical activity and 10 for individual resilience and sleep. The results show that a Mediterranean dietary pattern, a high diet quality and the consumption of fruits and vegetables are positively associated with resilience. In contrast, a Western dietary pattern seems to have negative implications. Physical activity, good sleep quality and adequate sleep duration were positively associated with resilience, while low sleep quality and increased sleep disturbances were associated with lower resilience. As almost all the included studies were of a cross-sectional nature, a causal relationship cannot be inferred. However, the potential influence of diet, physical activity and sleep on resilience can be supported by psychological, (neuro)biological and social factors.

**Keywords:** mental health; well-being; lifestyle factors



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