

Eating the right way. Dietary tips to combat stress and anxiety.

Stress can take its toll on your body over time and one way it does this is by depleting your body's stores of nutrients. Don't let stress beat you – find out what you need to do to get back on form.

Stress is a normal part of everybody's lives and in some circumstances, it can be integral to survival. But when you are regularly stressed, or stressed over a long period of time, your body pays the price.

Being stressed stimulates your adrenal glands, which can increase the secretion of hormones that cause a loss of minerals. The minerals calcium, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium stores are depleted in this way. Vitamins B and C are too. So, it's important if you feel stressed that you include in your diet plenty of the following foods, which are rich in these nutrients:

Calcium, magnesium, phosphorus and potassium-rich foods



Green leafy vegetables, globe artichokes, parsley, nuts; in particular almonds, seeds; in particular pumpkin seeds, small canned fish with soft bones (e.g. sardines, salmon), prunes, dried figs, apricots, chickpeas, baked beans and buckwheat, tofu and soya products, blackstrap molasses, yoghurt, whole grains, garlic and brown rice.

Vitamin B-rich foods



Egg yolk, liver, wheatgerm, nuts, red meat, cereals, yeast, dairy products, vegetables, fish, whole grains, such as wheat and oats, leafy green vegetables and beans and peas.

Vitamin C-rich foods



Citrus fruits, blackcurrants, gooseberries, guava, kiwi, lychees, paw-paw, raspberries, parsley, spinach, green beans, peas, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, kale, peppers, spring greens and watercress.



Mood enhancers



♦ Selenium rich foods:

Brazil nuts, lentils, wheat germ, kidneys, liver, tuna, oily fish, seafood, sunflower seeds, cashew nuts and oats.

Nutrition as the cause



Nutrient deficiency can also be a cause of anxiety. Chromium deficiency has this effect, so getting plenty of chromium can help prevent the condition.

♦ Chromium rich foods:

Brewer's yeast, oysters, liver, whole grains, bran cereals and potatoes.

If you haven't tried tweaking what you eat then you may be missing an important opportunity to manage your stress and anxiety. Give these foods a try and see if modifying your diet helps reduce your anxiety.



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