

FOOD, MOOD, AND MENTAL WELLNESS

SWAP OUT ANXIETY

Life can be stressful! Having positive mental health and a self-care plan is more important than ever. It can be hard to know how to best care for yourself when you are dealing with anxiety or during a stressful situation. You can help your body deal with stress and stay healthy by maintaining a healthy diet and avoiding certain foods. Here are some healthy swaps to help you replace foods that may contribute to anxiety.



Avoid Alcohol and Caffeine. Hydrate Instead!

When stress and anxiety kick in, an alcoholic drink or caffeine boost may seem appealing. Alcohol seems to have a calming effect when life feels tough and caffeine can lift us out of a slump. These effects are short-lived, however, and affect your body's ability to deal with the fight or flight response appropriately. They are also dehydrating. **Choose hydration instead!**

Dehydration can lead to mood dysfunction and memory loss. Being properly hydrated assists with brain function and delivers nutrients throughout the body to keep you energized. Although plain water should be your drink of choice, sipping on herbal tea or infused water are other options with a calming effect.

Cut the Bad Fat. Consume Omega-3 Fatty Acid.

Chips, fries, cheeseburgers, and other comfort foods may seem like the way to go to feel better. All foods loaded with saturated fat may feel good at first, but the effect is temporary. They can cause hypertension and higher levels of cholesterol that harm the heart. **Nourish your body with good fat instead!**

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in fish, flax, chia seeds and walnuts. These fatty acids assist with cognitive function and promote brain health and better memory. Try baking fresh fish, adding flax to your smoothies, or nibbling on a few walnuts.



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Skip the Sugar. Nosh on Nuts!

Stress and anxiety zap the body's energy. When energy is low and stress is high, a sugar rush may seem like the answer. Eating sugary foods spike blood sugar levels and are nothing more than empty calories. **Nuts and seeds are nutritional powerhouses.**

Boost brain function, cognitive health, and mood function while promoting calmness. Try topping your favourite dishes with nuts and seeds or enjoy a handful as a mood-boosting snack. Keep in mind, a serving is only 1.5 ounces. It may be smaller than you think, but it's satiating and tasty!

Anxiety-Buster

Why it Helps



Avocados are a great source of healthy fats. This fruit provides fuel for the brain and stress-reducing vitamins and minerals.



There is a correlation between stress and poor gut health. Fermented foods are full of good bacteria that promote a healthy gut. When your gut feels better, you feel better.



Leafy greens are rich in nutrients, like magnesium, which enhances feelings of relaxation in the brain.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/in-the-zone/201201/anxiety-and-omega-3-fatty-acids>
<https://www.healthambition.com/top-10-anti-anxiety-foods/>

Anxiety? Wrap it Up!

2 servings

Ingredients

4 large collard green leaves
1 avocado
2 tbsp raw pumpkin, sunflower, or hemp seeds
2/3 cup shredded red cabbage
2 cup green leaf or romaine lettuce, chopped
3 lime wedges
Sauerkraut (optional)

Directions

Trim bottom stems off of the collard greens and lightly steam the leaves.
Mash the avocado and distribute between 3 leaves, spreading just below the center of the leaf. Top with raw seeds, then cabbage, and lettuce. Add sauerkraut if you'd like.
Add a squeeze of lime.
Fold the bottom part of the leaf over the stuffing. Roll the leaf down, folding in the sides as you go.
Store in the fridge for up to 48 hours.

Adapted from: www.hellonutritarian.com

Nutrition Info Per Serving: Cal 256 | Fat 18.4g | Carb 14g | Pro 11g |
Fibre 5.5g | Sod 36mg | Sugar 1.6g

