

DISTRESS OR DE-STRESS

KEEP CALM AND EAT ON

HOW DOES STRESS HAPPEN?

Winning the lottery, losing a family member, the birth of a baby, getting a new job, threats to our health, separation or divorce, a broken leg, a noisy workplace.... The examples of where stress can come from are virtually endless. Stress is defined as any emotional, physical, social, economic, or other factor that requires change. The greater the change, the greater the stress experienced. Too much stress can be detrimental to your physical and mental well-being.

Psychological Factors

- emotional tension
- anxiety
- excitement

Physical Factors

- injury to the body
- muscle tension
- infection



Your body is physiologically prepared to deal with stressful situations using a survival mechanism known as the [fight-or-flight response](#).

The fight-or-flight response explains how your body reacts to stress. When you experience stress, your heart pumps faster, your blood vessels to the skin become narrow, you breathe faster, your pupils expand, and you become more alert.

Being in this state for too long will lead to a decrease in your productivity and poorer health. Too much stress leads to burnout.

NUTRITION AND STRESS. HOW ARE THEY RELATED?

- **Your Diet Can Be a Source of Stress.** Poor eating habits such as skipping meals, consuming too much caffeine, sugar, salt, fat, or alcohol, vitamin overdoses, overeating, undereating, or dieting put the body under stress. Poor eating habits can lead to nutrient deficiencies, health problems, and chronic disease.
- **Your Diet Can Affect Your Body's Ability to Handle Stress.** During stressful situations, your body requires energy to perform the fight-or-flight response. The foods you eat provide energy in the form of carbohydrates, protein, and fat. Your body draws on these stores to provide energy for the stress response. You can prepare your body for stressful situations by eating foods that protect and fight against stress.
- **Stress Can Affect Your Nutrient Needs.** If your body does not have enough vitamins and minerals stored in the body or taken in through your diet daily, you may not be equipped to defend yourself in stressful situations. You may need a vitamin and mineral supplement to meet your everyday nutrient needs. Nutrients commonly affected by extreme stresses include protein, zinc, calcium, vitamins A and C, and iron.

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Good nutrition is one way to keep you functioning at your best. Enjoy a variety of foods from the Canada Food Guide every day. Make your diet work for you, not against you.

FIGHT AND PROTECT

FIGHT back with Vitamin C. Studies suggest that vitamin C can reduce levels of stress hormones while strengthening the immune system. In one study people with high blood pressure, blood pressure and cortisol levels (a stress hormone) returned to normal more quickly when people took vitamin C before a stressful task.

Super C Smoothie

1 serving (166% Vitamin C!)

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup frozen mango
- 1/2 cup frozen strawberries
- 1/2 cup frozen pineapple
- 1/2 cup frozen banana
- 2/3 cup non-dairy milk or orange juice
- 1 tbsp golden ground flax seed
- 1/4 cup blackberries



Directions

Blend all ingredients. Top with berries and ground flaxseeds.

Nutrition Per Serving: Cal 304 | Fat 7g | Carb 56g | Pro 8g | Fibre 10g | Sod 84mg | Sugar 37g

Source: <https://theprettybee.com/super-vitamin-c-smoothie/>

PROTECT with Omega-3 fatty acids. Found in fish like salmon and tuna, Omega-3s can prevent surges in stress hormones and protect against heart disease, mood disorders like depression, and premenstrual syndrome. For a steady supply of omega-3s, eat 3 ounces of fatty fish at least three times a week.

Easy Tuna Burgers

4 servings

Ingredients

- 2 6-ounce cans chunky light tuna, drained
- 1/2 cup coarse dry whole-wheat breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup low-fat mayonnaise, divided
- 1 4-ounce jar chopped pimientos, drained, or 1/3 cup chopped roasted red peppers, divided
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 1/2 tsp Old Bay seasoning, divided
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 4 whole-wheat hamburger buns, toasted
- Lettuce leaves and tomato slices (optional toppings)



Directions

1. Combine tuna, breadcrumbs, 1/4 cup mayonnaise, half of the pimientos (or peppers), celery, onion, and 1/4 tsp Old Bay seasoning in a medium bowl. Mix until the mixture is uniform and holds together.
2. Combine the remaining 1/4 cup mayonnaise, the remaining pimientos (or peppers), and 1/4 tsp Old Bay seasoning in a bowl.
3. Heat oil in a large, nonstick skillet over medium heat. Form the tuna mixture into four 3-inch burgers (use a generous 1/3 cup for each burger). Cook until heated through and golden brown, about 2 minutes per side.
4. Spread half of each bun with pimiento mayonnaise and add a burger, lettuce, and tomato.

Nutrition Per Serving: Cal 321 | Fat 12g | Carb 39g | Pro 17g | Fibre 5g | Sod 647mg

yummy!

Sources: www.eatingwell.com
London Middlesex Health Unit