

Use Food to Reduce Anxiety

What you eat and drink can affect you level of anxiety.

Everyone is a little different in terms of how we react to what we eat and drink. Some substances in the foods we eat have been linked to increasing anxiety while other substances have been linked to decreasing anxiety levels.

To be fully aware of everything you are putting in your body, it may be helpful to record your food intake, read the labels on the packages and cook more from home.

Food substances that may increase anxiety include caffeine, refined sugar, refined flour, and alcohol.

Caffeine: coffee, tea, chocolate, pop, energy drinks

Refined / white sugar: non-diet pop, candy, cookies, cakes, ice cream, desserts, sugar-coated cereal

Alcohol: beer, wine, hard liquor

Food components that may decreasing anxiety include B-vitamins, omega-3 fatty acids, zinc, magnesium, and vitamin D.

B-vitamins: meat, dairy, eggs, whole grains, leafy greens, fortified cereals, and bananas.

Omega - 3: cold water fish, flax, hemp, chia seeds and omega-3 fortified foods like eggs.

Zinc: red meat, liver, eggs, dairy, vegetables, and some seafood.

Magnesium: leafy green vegetables, nuts, seeds, and legumes.

Vitamin D: fatty fish (tuna, mackerel, salmon), fortified foods (some dairy, orange juice, soy milk, almond milk, cereals), egg yolks.

The next time you are feeling anxious, take a moment to think about what you had eaten in the previous 24 hours. Are there anxiety promoting foods included? What happens when you eat less of these foods? Take some time to track your food intake and see if there is an association with your anxiety level.

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