

EASY MEALS TO BOOST YOUR MOOD



Eat Or Not To Eat

We all feel blue from time to time, and food can play an important role in helping us lift our mood and improve our outlook on life. Eating when you're stressed or feeling low is usually not recommended but certain foods have lasting powers to bust anxiety, fight depression, and help you reduce the effects of stress before your performances.

1

BREAKFASTS

2

MEALS

3

SNACKS

Fight Anxiety



Fight Depression



Fight Feeling Blue



DID YOU KNOW?

Skipping meals, eating erratically or eating sugary meals and snacks can send our blood sugar levels out of whack. This leads to an imbalance of hormones - including

stress hormones - and can make us irritable or cranky. Hypoglycemia, or low blood sugar, is linked to depression and anxiety. Consuming complex carbohydrates, protein, fat and fibre with each meal and snack will help your blood sugar levels stay on track.



Here are some healthy recipes featuring mood-boosting foods that you can use at any time of the day.

1

BREAKFASTS



OATS AND WHOLE GRAINS

Choosing whole grains and high-fiber foods over refined sugar and flour products is good for your body and brain health. Keeping your blood sugar stable by not eating too many sweets or highly refined carbohydrates is a good place to start.

Oats are an effective mood booster because of their low glycemic index (GI) - they slowly release energy into the bloodstream, which keeps blood sugar and mood stable (as opposed to providing a rush that dips quickly, leaving you feeling more irritable). Oats also contain the mood-boosting mineral selenium.

WHOLE-GRAIN CEREAL WITH MILK AND BLUEBERRIES

Studies link fortified with calcium and vitamin B cereal to good mental health because it helps to reduce the levels of stress and anxiety. Also research shows that people who drink milk fortified with vitamin D are less likely to get depressed.

Berries are a favorite antioxidant-containing food for many reasons. One of which is because they help make your brain happy. Studies have shown that the flavonoids in blueberries can improve your mood.



AVOCADO TOAST

Avocados are rich in B vitamins – particularly vitamin B6. And they're a rich source of folate. One avocado provides around one-third of your daily folate needs. When it comes to magnesium, one avocado provides around 15% of your daily needs.



CHIA

Chia seeds are a plant-based source of omega-3 fatty acids, and they contain a wealth of additional nutrients like protein, fibre, calcium and iron. This mood boosting food is also a good source of magnesium, nature's relaxant mineral, and it can help reduce stress and anxiety.

2

MEALS

SPINACH QUINOA SALAD

Spinach Quinoa Salad may be filled with many healthy foods like avocado, bell pepper, cucumber, tomato, shitake mushrooms and a sprinkle of feta, with the lemon dijon vinaigrette. Quinoa is not only a great protein source—it's also a complex carbohydrate that can help prevent depression and anxiety by increasing levels of serotonin in the brain. And beyond the mood-boosting B vitamins in spinach, mushrooms are a source of selenium, a compound that may help fight depression.



CHICKEN AND TURKEY BREAST

Chicken and turkey breast also help increase your intake of the amino acid tryptophan, which the body uses tryptophan to make serotonin - one of the most important neurotransmitters when it comes to mood. It also helps to make the hormone melatonin, which regulate sleep.



Lean poultry also contains another

amino acid called tyrosine, which can help reduce symptoms of depression and help you avoid feeling blue in the first place. Tyrosine is used to make the hormone adrenaline - low levels of which have been associated with depression.

You can't really over do it on chicken and turkey - use them a few times a week in soups, sandwiches or on their own with vegetables.





LENTIL SALAD

Lentils are complex carbohydrate so, like bananas, help increase the brain's production of the feel-good neurotransmitter serotonin. This results in a calmer, happier state of mind with less anxiety.

They also help to stabilise your blood sugar levels, keeping your mood even. They're also high in folate - deficiencies in folate have been linked to depression. And finally, lentils can help boost your iron levels, which will give you a nice shot of energy.

Along with the lentils, you can also add to the salad cucumbers, tomatoes, red onion, parsley, kalamata olives and feta. The salad is tossed together in a red wine vinaigrette that's lightly sweetened with honey.

OILY FISH

People who are deficient in omega-3 fatty acids may be more susceptible to depression and low mood, according to research, as these fatty acids make up a large percentage of our brain tissue.

Eating salmon, mackerel and sardines regularly will keep your brain healthy and improves your mood by keeping brain cells flexible, so the brain's messaging chemicals -neurotransmitters - can work more effectively.



BANANAS

Bananas contain the amino acid tryptophan as well as vitamins A, B6 and C, fibre, potassium, phosphorous, iron and carbohydrate. Mood-boosting carbohydrates aid in the absorption of tryptophan in the brain, while vitamin B6 helps convert the tryptophan into the mood-lifting hormone serotonin. This helps to boost your mood and also aids sleep. Because of its ability to raise serotonin levels, tryptophan has been used in the treatment of a variety of conditions, such as insomnia, depression and anxiety.



BRASIL NUTS & WALNUTS

Brazil nuts are one of the best sources of the mineral selenium, and studies have shown that people who are low in it have increased rates of depression, irritability, anxiety and tiredness.

Walnuts have many brain-protective compounds, such as vitamin E, folate, antioxidant polyphenols. They also contain omega-3 fats, which have been shown to improve mood.



DARK CHOCOLATE

There's a reason why chocolate always seems to make things better. A small square of dark chocolate causes the brain to release endorphins and boost serotonin levels. In a recent study, 30 people were given 40g of dark chocolate, over 14 days. The results showed that chocolate eaters produced less stress hormones and their anxiety levels decreased.



GRANOLA BARS WITH CHOCOLATE



Chocolate granola bars may look like cookies, but they're actually nutritious ways to perk up. They're filled with ingredients that fight depression and anxiety, like the omega-3s in flaxseed. Even better, dark chocolate's a stress-buster and oats are a source of soluble fiber that helps prevent mood swings.