

## ASK THE NUTE GURU

## THE NUTE (NUTRITION) GURU IMPARTS WISDOM ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF NATURAL, WHOLE-FOODS NUTRITION FOR MIND/BODY WELLNESS.

Q

Hey Nute Guru, I feel like I'm drowning in stress and anxiety these days. It's maddening! Are there foods that can help me with this?

A

Life's busy, bewildering and sometimes just plain crazy, but no worries...as always, there are nutrition choices that you can make that will help. Check out these 7 foods that can drastically cut down on the amount of anxiety you experience - and possibly improve your mood.

### The 7 Best Anti-Anxiety Foods

#### Whole Grain Foods

Those that can tolerate gluten may benefit from foods with whole grains, like whole grain pasta and bread. Studies have shown that true whole grains have several benefits for those with anxiety:

- Whole grain is rich in magnesium, and magnesium deficiency may lead to anxiety.
- Whole grain contains tryptophan, which becomes serotonin - a calming neurotransmitter.
- Whole grains create healthy energy while reducing hunger - both important for anxiety.
- Whole grain foods can have a powerful effect on anxiety, and contain nutrients that have been stripped out of modern day diets.

#### Seaweed

Seaweed has many of the same benefits as whole grains. Not only is it rich in nutrients - it also appears to have a high magnesium content, and kelp and other seaweed appear to be very high in tryptophan content. Seaweed is a good alternative to whole grains for those that are gluten sensitive.

#### Blueberries

Blueberries are more than a delicious fruit. Many consider it to be a superfood. It's rich in vitamins and phytonutrients (plant nutrients), with a variety of antioxidants that are considered extremely beneficial for relieving stress. Many experts also believe that peaches fall into this category as well, because they have nutrients that appear to have a sedation (calming) effect.

#### Acai Berries

Acai berry is essentially the newest super food, and one that has received a great deal of press recently. It may not be the weight loss fruit that many people claimed it was, but acai berries are still rich in phytonutrients like the blueberry, and the antioxidant levels are off the charts.

#### Almonds

Almonds are an underrated food. They contain zinc, a key nutrient for maintaining a balanced mood - and have both iron and healthy fats. Healthy fats are an important part of a balanced diet, and low iron levels have been known to cause brain fatigue, which can contribute to both anxiety and a lack of energy.

#### Chocolate

Chocolate - especially pure dark chocolate without the added sugars or milks - is also a great food for those living with anxiety and stress. Chocolate reduces cortisol - the stress hormone that causes anxiety symptoms. There are also compounds inside dark chocolate that improve mood.

#### Maca Root

Maca root is not exactly a popular food item in grocery stores, but the powder can be added to several foods and beverages and is found in a variety of health food stores. It's believed that this root has more phytonutrients than nearly every type of fruit and vegetable, including magnesium and iron - two important nutrients for controlling anxiety. It also is often used for healthy stamina and energy.

#### Crucial Foods to Avoid

There are foods that help anxiety, but just as important is making sure that you're not eating foods that contribute to anxiety. Examples of these types of foods include fried foods, high-glycemic carbs, unrefined sugars, and alcoholic beverages.

Other foods depend on how much you understand your own anxiety. If you have panic attacks, you may want to avoid coffee, because coffee can increase your heart rate and trigger an attack. But if you have more general anxiety, coffee may actually be beneficial. Many find that caffeine (in low quantities, of course), can actually reduce stress and improve mood.

<http://www.calmclinic.com/anxiety/treatment/7-foods-that-fight-anxiety>

## PROJECT: PFC