

Foods That Fight Stress

Stress seems inevitable and it can feel all-consuming at times. It comes at us from all angles – the news, work, financial stress, relationship stress.

When our bodies are in constant stress mode, our adrenal glands (the glands that produce the stress hormone cortisol) go on overdrive and can eventually get tired, or fatigued. You may have even heard of the condition adrenal fatigue. This is not something to take lightly. When our stress hormones are off, this causes a cascade of down-river side effects throughout the entire body. Truly, unaddressed stress shuts the body down. Our sex hormones are affected, our sleep hormones are affected... you name it, it's probably affected by chronic stress. So how DO we break this stress cycle?

We have good news! Stress doesn't have to take over your life. In fact, we have some tips to help you combat stress through food and simple lifestyle tips so you can break the cycle once and for all.

1 | Balance Blood Sugar

Eating balanced meals at regular intervals throughout the day will keep your blood sugar stable which is an essential first step. In fact, the symptoms of low blood sugar are often mistaken for anxiety so doing this one thing can make a BIG difference. Make sure to eat every 3-5 hours and include healthy fats (avocado, coconut, ghee, nuts, seeds, nut butters), protein (eggs, nuts, fish, organic meats, beans, lentils), and complex carbohydrates (veggies, sweet potato, brown rice, quinoa, beans, fruits) at every meal.

2 | Up Your Micros

We talked about balancing your macros (fat, protein, and carbs) to keep your blood sugar stable but your micros are just as important when it comes to combating stress. Certain micronutrients get used up more quickly during times of stress so it's important to load up on these vitamins and minerals, particularly:

- Vitamin C (citrus, berries, bell peppers, broccoli)
- Zinc (pumpkin seeds, lean meat, seafood, yogurt)
- B vitamins (whole grains, liver, meat, dates, pumpkin, avocado)
- Magnesium (dark leafy greens, dark chocolate, nuts, seeds, tomatoes)

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3 | Supplement As Needed

Sometimes the nutrients in food simply aren't enough to get the job done. Luckily, there are some amazing stress-busting herbs and therapeutic nutrients available out there to help you get to your zen state. We recommend working with one of our nutritionists for some guidance before choosing a therapeutic herb or supplement but here's a list of our favorites:

- L-theanine (found naturally in green tea)
- Ashwagandha
- Rhodiola
- GABA

4 | Breathe

It sounds so easy, doesn't it? Well, it is...if you remember to do it! Many of us go days without taking a true, deep, long breath. Set a reminder on your phone or computer, download an app, or just jot it down on a Post-It note and stick it somewhere you'll see it every day. Whatever you have to do to remember to take a few moments to just breathe.

5 | Catch Some Zzz's

Lack of sleep increases stress hormones so prioritize sleep and take mini naps if needed. Aim to get at least 7 hours of restful sleep each night. Need more convincing? Lack of sleep has also been linked to weight gain, hormone imbalance, heart disease, depression, and low libido. And to really kick us while we're down, lack of sleep can cause rapid aging of the skin. If you have trouble sleeping, taking magnesium before bed can help. We also love sleepy time teas with valerian root, passionflower, and lavender to help us relax and rest peacefully.

6 | Take a Bath

If you have a tub, a bath is highly recommended. Add two cups of epsom salt to relax the body (relaxes muscles due to its high magnesium content). We also love adding a few drops of lavender essential oil, which has been used for centuries to promote relaxation and ease stress.