

NUTRITION FOR DEPRESSION & ANXIETY



NUTRITIONAL STRATEGIES TO EASE ANXIETY

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, anxiety disorders are the most common mental illness in the United States. That's 40 million adults—18% of the population—who struggle with anxiety.

Anxiety and depression often go hand in hand, with about half of those with depression also experiencing anxiety. In addition to healthy guidelines such as eating a balanced diet, drinking enough water to stay hydrated, and limiting or avoiding alcohol and caffeine, there are many other dietary considerations that can help relieve anxiety.

FOODS THAT CAN HELP COMBAT ANXIETY

- Foods rich in zinc such as oysters, cashews, liver, beef, and egg yolks have been linked to lowered anxiety.
- Other foods, including fatty fish like wild Alaskan salmon, contain omega-3 fatty acid. A 2011 study completed showed that omega-3s may help reduce anxiety. (This study used supplements containing omega-3 fatty acids). Prior to the study, omega-3 fatty acids had been linked to improving depression only.
- Asparagus, known widely to be a healthy vegetable. Based on research, asparagus extract as a natural functional food and beverage ingredient due to its anti-anxiety properties.
- Foods rich in B vitamins such as avocado and almonds

ARE ANTIOXIDANTS ANTI-ANXIETY?

Anxiety is thought to be correlated with a lowered total antioxidant state. It stands to reason, therefore, that enhancing your diet with foods rich in antioxidants may help ease the symptoms of anxiety disorders. A 2010 study reviewed the antioxidant content of 3,100 foods, spices, herbs, beverages, and supplements.

- Beans: Dried small red, Pinto, black, red kidney
- Fruits: Apples (Gala, Granny Smith, Red Delicious), prunes, sweet cherries, plums, black plums
- Berries: Blackberries, strawberries, cranberries, raspberries, blueberries
- Nuts: Walnuts, pecans
- Vegetables: Artichokes, kale, spinach, beets, broccoli

