

# Wellness

## Wednesday



January 31, 2024

LifeAdvisor.com

**Ulliance**  
Enhancing People. Improving Business.



*Find your path to total well-being!*

## 7 Morning Activities That Are Definitely Bad For Your Anxiety

If you start your day off stressed, these common habits could be the culprit.

Anxiety is a common experience that many people face, especially in the mornings. The rush and stress of starting the day can often lead to heightened feelings of anxiety and tension. However, by understanding the factors that contribute to morning anxiety and implementing strategies to overcome them, you can set a more positive tone for the rest of your day. In this Wellness Wednesday, we will explore seven morning activities that can exacerbate anxiety and provide practical tips for managing them effectively.

### 1. Inconsistent Sleep Patterns

Waking up and going to bed at vastly different times each day can disrupt your body's natural cortisol awakening response, leading to increased fatigue and burnout. Research professor Elizabeth Shirtcliff explains that our bodies anticipate waking up based on our consistent sleep patterns, and a lack of predictability can hinder this process.



To combat this, establish a regular sleep schedule by going to bed and waking up at the same time each day, even on weekends. This consistency allows your cortisol awakening response to occur naturally, providing the protective boost you need to start your day on a positive note.

### 2. Rushing to Get Out the Door

Starting your day in a rushed and chaotic manner can significantly contribute to feelings of anxiety and stress. Licensed professional counselor Amber Benziger suggests creating a basic morning routine to avoid the frantic rush that can disrupt your normal routine.

By establishing a structured morning routine, you can alleviate some of the stress and anxiety associated with rushing. Give yourself ample time to complete your morning tasks, allowing for a calm and organized start to your day.

### 3. Checking Messages or the News Right Away

Checking your messages, social media, or the news as soon as you wake up bombards you with information that can overwhelm and distract you from your morning tasks. This can lead to increased anxiety and a sense of being mentally scattered.

---

To mitigate this, resist the urge to immediately engage with digital distractions upon waking. Instead, focus on your morning routine and the tasks at hand. Save social media browsing and news consumption for later in the day when you are better prepared to handle the influx of information.

#### **4. Not Getting Enough Sleep**

A good night's sleep is crucial for reducing anxiety, as it allows for a healthy cortisol awakening response. When you get sufficient sleep, your body experiences a natural jumpstart, energizing you for the day ahead.

Conversely, a lack of sleep disrupts the cortisol awakening response and leads to ongoing stress and fatigue. To ensure a restful night's sleep, establish a relaxing bedtime routine, create a comfortable sleep environment, and prioritize sleep hygiene practices such as avoiding caffeine and electronic devices before bed.

#### **5. Excessive Caffeine Consumption**

Excessive caffeine intake can trigger anxiety symptoms and exacerbate feelings of restlessness and jitteriness. Caffeine acts as a stimulant, heightening your body's physiological response and potentially mimicking the sensations of anxiety.

While the tolerance for caffeine varies from person to person, it is generally recommended to limit consumption to 400 milligrams per day, which is roughly equivalent to four cups of coffee. Monitoring your caffeine intake can help you identify whether excessive consumption is contributing to your morning anxiety.

#### **6. Drinking Coffee on an Empty Stomach**

Having coffee on an empty stomach can further contribute to feelings of anxiety and jitteriness. The Cleveland Clinic warns that caffeine is absorbed more rapidly when there is no food in your stomach, intensifying its effects.

To minimize the impact of caffeine on anxiety, ensure that you consume coffee or other caffeinated beverages alongside a balanced meal or snack. This can help slow down the absorption of caffeine and reduce its potential negative effects on your anxiety levels.

#### **7. Beginning Your Day with Negative Self-Talk**

Starting your day with negative self-talk or self-critical thoughts can significantly contribute to feelings of stress and anxiety throughout the day. Therapist Amber Benziger highlights the importance of recognizing and interrupting negative self-talk patterns.

Become aware of the messages you send yourself, especially when looking in the mirror or reflecting on your abilities and worth. Challenge negative thoughts and replace them with positive affirmations or realistic perspectives. Cultivating self-compassion and nurturing a positive mindset can help alleviate morning anxiety.

#### **In Summary**

To reduce morning anxiety, establish a consistent sleep pattern, avoid rushing, limit digital distractions, prioritize sleep, moderate caffeine intake, consume coffee with food, and foster a positive mindset. Personalized guidance and support from a mental health professional may also be helpful. Take care of your mental well-being and prioritize self-care for a calmer and more productive day.

---



# MUSHROOM TOAST



## INGREDIENTS

### Equipment

- skillet

### Ingredients

- 5 large baby bella mushrooms, or use oyster mushrooms, white button, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 pinch kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon extra virgin olive oil or butter
- 1 slice sour dough bread, cut 1/4 inch thick, toasted (1 ounce)
- 1 tbsp labneh, or cream cheese
- 1 teaspoon Dukkah seasoning, or Za'atar

### MUSHROOMS ON TOAST

There's something uniquely satisfying about the rich, earthy flavors of mushrooms. When paired with the crisp, comforting texture of toasted bread, it creates a culinary experience that's both simple and sublime. Use any mushrooms you like, or experiment with some new varieties

### SERVING SUGGESTIONS

Serve this easy toast with mushrooms with poached or sunny side eggs, with a side salad or a cup of soup, or enjoy it in all its glory, unadorned. The beauty of this dish is its simplicity and the way it lets the flavors of the mushrooms shine.

### STORAGE

This recipe for mushrooms on toast is for one person, but if you want to have leftovers, cook more mushrooms. Store them in the refrigerator for four days in an airtight container. Wait to toast your bread and assemble the dish until right before eating.

### Nutrition Information

Serving: 1 piece toast, Calories: 196 kcal, Carbohydrates: 20.5 g, Protein: 7 g, Fat: 10.5 g, Saturated Fat: 4 g, Cholesterol: 14.5 mg, Sodium: 222 mg, Fiber: 2 g, Sugar: 3.5 g



## INSTRUCTIONS



## HOW TO MAKE IT

1. Saute the mushrooms, garlic, salt and olive oil in a skillet until cooked and tender, about 8-10 minutes.
2. On a toasted slice of bread, spread the labneh. Top with the mushrooms and sprinkle with Dukkah seasoning. Serve it with a runny egg for extra protein if desired.

## VARIATIONS OF MUSHROOM TOAST

One of the best things about Mushroom Toast is its versatility. Here are some exciting variations to try:

1. **Mushroom Selection:** Experiment with different mushroom varieties to discover new taste profiles. Swap baby bella mushrooms with oyster, white button, or portobello mushrooms for a unique twist.
2. **Cheese Options:** If you're not a fan of labneh, feel free to replace it with cream cheese for a tangy and creamy flavor.
3. **Seasoning Alternatives:** If you can't find Dukkah seasoning, try using Za'atar or everything bagel seasoning as a substitute. Each blend will bring its own distinct flavor profile to your Mushroom Toast.
4. **Bread Choices:** Don't limit yourself to sourdough bread. Pumpernickel or rye bread can add a hearty and robust taste to your Mushroom Toast. If you prefer a packaged option, consider using Dave's Killer Bread Thin Slice.
5. **Gluten-Free Option:** If you follow a gluten-free diet, simply swap out the bread for your favorite gluten-free alternative. There are plenty of delicious options available in stores or you can even make your own.

Feel free to get creative with your Mushroom Toast and customize it according to your taste preferences. The possibilities are endless!



## FEATURED EXERCISE

<https://www.self.com/gallery/essential-calf-stretches>Featured Exercise ► Downward Dog With Foot Pedal 

## HOW TO DO IT:

1. Start in a high plank with your hands directly under your shoulders.
2. Pressing through your fingers and palms, shift your weight back to bring your butt to the ceiling, so your body's in an inverted V shape.
3. Rise up on the toes of one foot while you press the heel of the opposite foot into the floor. Reverse the motion, and do the same pedaling motion on the other side. Continue pedaling.

## BENEFITS:

This dynamic version of the downward dog stretches your hamstrings, heels, and calves.

Downward Facing Dog is a full-body stretch that targets multiple muscle groups simultaneously. As you press your hands into the mat and lift your hips upward, you'll feel a deep stretch in your calves, hamstrings, and Achilles tendons. This pose also engages your arms, shoulders, and upper back, helping to build strength and stability in these areas.



[Click here to view online!](#)

Regular exercise can help you control your weight, reduce your risk of heart disease, and strengthen your bones and muscles. But if it's been awhile since you've exercised and you have health issues or concerns, it's a good idea to talk to your doctor before starting a new exercise routine.



Meet Ulliance Senior  
Wellness Account Manager