

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## **Nutrition, Mental Health, and Immune System: Eating Strategies to Help You Deal with Pandemic Anxiety and Stress**

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# Nutrition and Mental Health



# Nutrition and Mental Health

## Anxiety and Anger: Is It Low Blood Sugar?

In the following lists, circle the symptoms that you experience:

### Anxiety or Anger

Racing thoughts  
Obsessive thoughts  
Worrying about the future  
Reliving past events  
Hyper-vigilance  
Avoiding certain situations  
Restlessness  
Angry outbursts  
Irritability  
Muscle tension  
Difficulty sleeping  
Palpitations  
Sweating  
Trembling  
Shortness of breath  
Feeling light-headed  
Chills and hot flashes  
Fatigue

### Hypoglycemia

#### **Mild signs**

Nervousness  
Trembling  
Increased heart rate  
Palpitations  
Increased sweating  
Hunger

#### **Moderate signs**

Irritability  
Decreased concentration  
Headache  
Fatigue  
Mental confusion

#### **Severe signs**

Unresponsive  
Unconscious  
Convulsions

### **Why are the symptoms of anxiety, anger, and hypoglycemia so similar?**

The symptoms are similar because they are caused by the same hormones. These hormones are the fight-or-flight hormones, called adrenaline. Anger is the fight and anxiety is the flight. When adrenaline is preparing the mind and body to fight or flee, it increases heart rate, respiratory rate, blood flow to skeletal muscles, blood glucose; decreases digestion, and stimulates the amygdala, the part of the brain that prepares for a quick response, to be ready for fight or flight.

The brain's primary fuel is glucose. When your blood sugar (glucose) becomes low, your brain becomes concerned. In order to continue to function well, your brain will tell your kidneys to release adrenaline in order to increase blood glucose. Although your brain now has some fuel, the amygdala has been stimulated by adrenaline. This can cause your concerns, anxieties, or irritations to become amplified.

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## How Can I Prevent Hypoglycemia?

- Eat protein for breakfast. Some good breakfasts are: a whole boiled egg and toast, a protein shake, quinoa with walnut, or nut butter (almond or cashew) on toast.
- Eat a small protein snack or meal every 2 to 4 hours.
- Eat something with protein or that is low in sugar, such as nuts (almonds, cashews, walnuts), nut butter, or hummus with apples or carrots for snacks.
- Decrease the portion sizes of foods that your body recognizes as sugars (sweets, breads, pastas, white rice, white potatoes).
- Have foods with fiber in them at every meal. Vegetables, seed grains (quinoa, brown rice, bulgur, millet), beans, nuts, and fruit are all great examples.
- Limit your alcohol intake to no more than 1 serving per day; always consume alcohol with food.
- Find ways to be physically active each day.
- Try to only eat sweets soon after eating foods that have fiber in them. This will slow the absorption of sugar into your blood stream.
- Take a multivitamin once a day. This will provide you with some nutrients that help control blood sugar.

*How do I know if hypoglycemia is contributing to my anxiety or anger?*

**Be curious.** Try keeping a daily log for a few days so you can see the patterns.

Time	Food	Drink	Activities	Emotions

**Some questions that suggest hypoglycemia:**

- Does the anxiety or anger occur 2 to 4 hours after eating?
- Does food help decrease the anxiety or anger?
- Did your breakfast lack protein?
- Do you eat a lot of sweets, breads, and pastas?

**Some questions that suggest an emotional component:**

- Is there a current situation or person whom you are anxious about or irritated with even right after a meal?
- Do you worry or become irritated about events that occurred in the past or will happen in the future?

*Who can help me with anxiety, anger and hypoglycemia?*

- A naturopathic doctor can help you identify and treat the physical causes of hypoglycemia. Although prevention of hypoglycemia is often about changing what and when you eat, there can also be other causes such as adrenal exhaustion, food allergies, high blood pressure, and weight gain.
- An acupuncturist often approaches anxiety, anger, and hypoglycemia symptoms differently than most Western doctors. Acupuncture can adjust qi in your body to decrease the symptoms. Additionally, the Chinese have developed herbal formulas that help with these conditions.
- A counselor or therapist can help you examine the emotional causes of anxiety and anger. Often, talking to a trained professional will help you with the situation and decrease your anxiety and anger. The decrease in the anxiety and anger can decrease the symptoms.

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## Protein for Breakfast

Protein for breakfast provides consistent energy throughout the day and prevents fatigue in the late afternoon. In order to consume a healthy amount of protein each day, you need to include it in every meal, particularly breakfast. Some of the most common breakfast foods, such as boxed cereal and white-bread toast, do not provide adequate amounts of protein.

**Easy, protein-filled breakfast ideas.** Many of these, such as hard-boiled eggs and quinoa cereal, can be started or made in advance.

- Quinoa cereal
- Protein shake
- Breakfast burrito with egg and beans
- Hard-boiled egg
- Plain yogurt with dark berries fruit
- Scrambled egg on rye toast
- Vegetable omelet
- Toast with nut butter (almond or/and beans cashew)
- Cottage cheese with fresh fruit

Healthy Protein Sources					
Legumes			Nuts		
Tofu	1/2 c	10 g	Nuts	1/4 c	8 g
Firm tofu	1/2 c	20 g	Seeds	2 T	3 g
Tempeh	1/2 c	16 g	Nut butter	2 T	8 g
Whole beans	1/2 c	7g	Seed butter	2 T	5 g
Lentils	1/2 c	9 g	Cheese		
Refried beans	1/2 c	8 g	Cottage cheese (LF)	1/2 c	12 g
Gardenburger	1 patty	11 g	Cream cheese (LF)	2 T	2 g
Seed Grains			Hard cheese	1 oz	7 g
Barley	1/2 c	10 g	Eggs		
Millet	1/2 c	4 g	Egg, whole	1	7 g
Dark rye flour	1/2 c	9 g	Egg substitute	1/4 c	7 g
Oats	1/2 c	3 g	Egg white	1	4 g
Quinoa	1/2 c	11 g	Note: Egg yolks contain nutrients that are excellent for mental health.		
Brown rice	1/2 c	3 g			
White rice	1/2 c	3 g	Other		
Dairy Substitutes			Protein powder	1 T	9-15 g
Soy milk	1 c	6 g	Yogurt (LF)	1 c	8-14 g
Soy cheese	1 oz	4-7 g	Wild fish	3 oz	21 g
Soy yogurt	1 c	6 g	Meat (poultry, beef, pork, etc.)	3 oz	21 g

### Cooked Quinoa

Mix 2 T nuts, 1 tsp honey, 1 tsp coconut oil, and a handful of dark berries such as blackberries, cherries, or raspberries into 1 c cooked quinoa.

Cooking quinoa:

Bring 1 c quinoa and 2 c water to a boil. Cover and simmer for 12 to 15 minutes.

### Protein Shake

Blend together 2 c plain soy milk, 2 scoops protein powder, 1 c dark berries (blueberries, raspberries, black-berries, etc.) and/or one banana, 2 T fresh cod-liver oil (by Carlson's or Nordic Naturals). For vegetarians, Udo's choice is a good essential oils blend to use instead of cod-liver oil.

### Breakfast Burrito

Wrap 1/4 c cooked beans, 1 scrambled egg, and a few teaspoons of salsa in a warmed tortilla.

### Hard-Boiled Eggs

Fill pot with water until eggs are completely covered. Bring water to a boil. Allow to boil for 12 minutes. Remove eggs and plunge them into cold water.

Eggs can be hard-boiled and kept in refrigerator for a few days.

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## Why Protein for Breakfast?

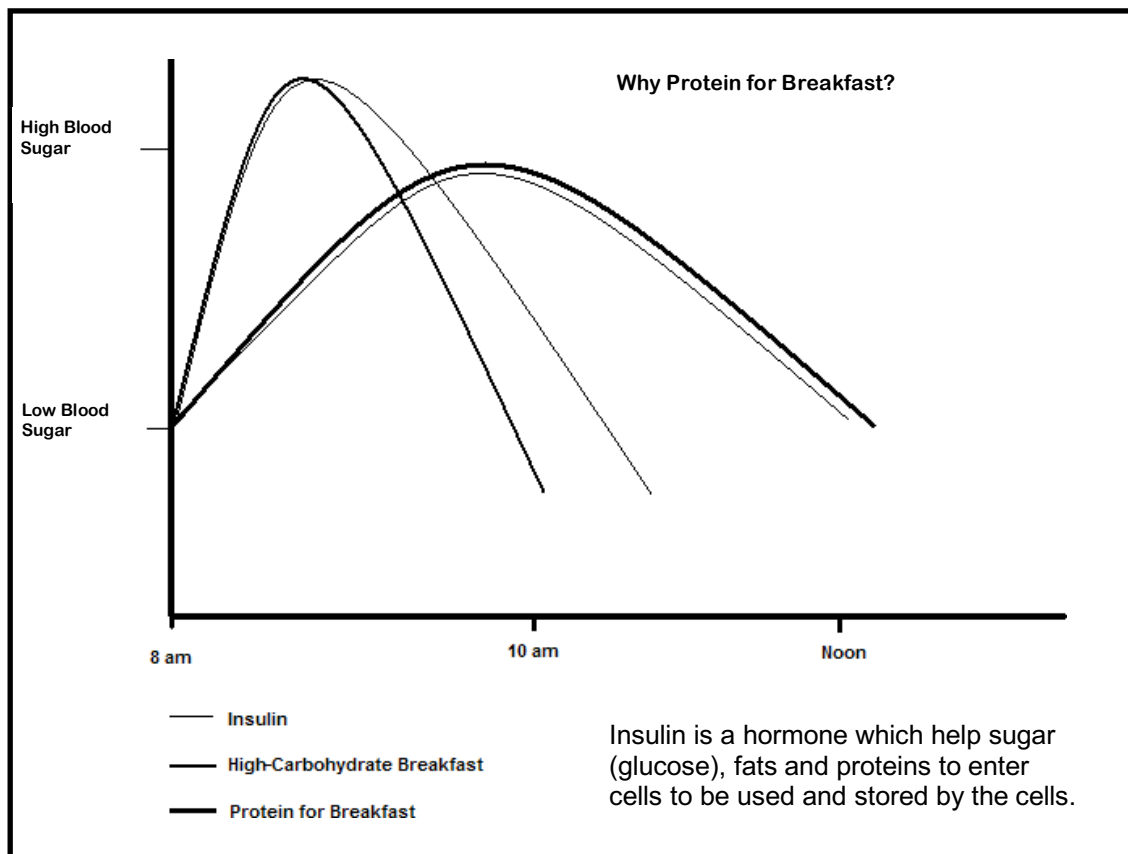
Less hunger, less fatigue, more energy, and mental clarity

### Test your meals:

1. Create a daily log to record when you eat, what you eat, when you are hungry, what your emotions are.
2. Eat your typical breakfast for 2-3 days and record it in the log.
3. Next, eat a breakfast with protein for 2-3 days and record it in the log.
4. A good breakfast should allow you to not be hungry for at least 3 hours.
5. Notice how different meals effect how long you can go without being hungry, and how food effects your mood, energy level, and mental clarity.

### Problems with High-Carbohydrate Meals:

1. They make you hungrier sooner than when you eat both protein and carbohydrates.
2. They make your blood sugar drop rapidly, which causes you to feel anxious and/or irritable.
3. When your blood sugar becomes low, you feel like you must eat sugar. Eating sugar creates the rollercoaster of high blood sugar and then low blood sugar.
4. Riding the high-carbohydrate meal rollercoaster throughout the day leads to fatigue in the late after- noon.
5. They are often low in fiber, vitamins, and minerals, creating nutrient deficiencies, which can cause anxiety, depression, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other diseases.
6. They also cause blood sugar to be high, which can cause weight gain and diabetes.



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## Getting Enough Protein?

### *Why is protein important?*

Protein provides the building blocks for every cell in your body: it is the foundation for bones, muscles and tendons. Protein serves as a source for the structures that regulate your body: neurotransmitters, cell receptors, and enzymes.

### How much protein should I eat?

The quick calculation for your target protein intake is 8 grams of protein for every 20 lbs of body weight (maximum of 120 grams protein per day). Or one third your caloric intake is protein. Use the chart below to find how much protein you should be eating.

YOUR WEIGHT (lbs)	TARGET (g protein)	ACCEPTABLE RANGE (g protein)
100	40	36-45
120	48	43-54
140	56	50-63
160	64	57-72
180	72	64-81
200	80	71-90

### Portion control

Here are some visual clues to help you keep servings to the proper size:

- 3 oz of meat = a deck of playing cards
- 1 c yogurt = a hand holding a tennis ball
- ½ c cooked grain = a small fist
- 1 oz cheese = a thumb
- 1 oz nuts = a golf ball
- 1 T nut butter or nuts = a silver dollar or a walnut
- 1 tsp oil = a quarter

### Benefits of eating enough protein

- Less fatigue, particularly in the afternoons
- Better sleep
- More energy
- Hungry less often
- Better and more stable moods
- Higher metabolism from having more muscle mass

Healthy Protein Sources					
Legumes			Nuts		
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Oats	1/2 c	3 g	Egg white	1	4 g
Quinoa	1/2 c	11 g	Note: Egg yolks contain nutrients that are excellent for mental health		
Brown rice	1/2 c	3 g			
White rice	1/2 c	3 g	Other		
Milk Substitutes			Protein powder	1 T	9-15 g
Soy milk	1 c	6 g	Yogurt (LF)	1 c	8-14 g
Soy cheese	1 oz	4-7 g	Wild fish	3 oz	21 g
Soy yogurt	1 c	6 g	Meat (poultry, beef, pork, etc.)	3 oz	21 g

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## How to Add Protein to Your Daily Life

### Planning Ahead

The easiest way to reach your target protein intake is to consume protein throughout the day. One way to add protein into your day is to plan your snacks ahead. The following snacks can be packed in the morning, or left in the office to eat when you need a boost:

- Hummus with carrots, celery, or pita bread
- Baba ghanoush with corn chips
- Almond butter sandwich
- Cottage cheese – can be bought in small, yogurt-sized containers
- Nut butter (almond or cashew) with apple slices

Or consider one of the following items when you are at the store looking for a snack:

- Odwalla protein shake
- A few slices of deli meat such as chicken or turkey
- Deli salad with chicken or turkey
- Tofu salads, etc.
- Teriyaki chicken kabobs

### Snacking on the road

Carry these snacks in a cool area of your car to snack on when you are feeling hungry or tired. Choose these instead of a trip to Starbucks or McDonald's:

- Bag of mixed, non-roasted nuts (hazelnuts, walnuts, almonds, cashews)
- Hard-boiled eggs
- Protein shake
- Low-sugar protein bar (like a Clif Bar)
- Keep a jar of nut butter in the car

### Finding the protein on a menu

Restaurants focus their menus on what will appeal to your stomach, not necessarily your health. Instead of ordering the usual pasta with red sauce and meat, consider one of the following options:

- Stir-fry with meat and veggies
- Bean soup
- Greek platter, includes foods like hummus, pita bread, baba ghanoush
- Chili, either vegetarian or with meat
- Grilled chicken sandwich

## Protein meals to cook at home

### Black Bean Quinoa Salad

½ c quinoa  
1 c white corn  
2 scallions, chopped  
½ c chopped green peppers  
½ c chopped tomatoes  
½ c chopped celery  
1 can black beans, drained & rinsed  
3-4 T olive oil  
2 T balsamic vinegar  
1 clove garlic, minced  
Salt and pepper to taste  
Cilantro or parsley

Soak the quinoa in water for 5 minutes, then drain. Cook in 1 c water (or vegetable stock) for 15 minutes. Drain, pour into large bowl, and let cool.

Mix remaining ingredients into the bowl. Serve cold.

### Bean and Quinoa Burrito

¼ c cooked quinoa  
¼ c fat-free refried beans  
1 T cheddar cheese  
To taste:  
Salsa  
Lettuce  
Avocado  
Low-fat sour cream  
Shredded chicken, turkey, or lean beef

Warm beans and quinoa in a small pot on the stove.

Microwave tortilla for 15 seconds.

Wrap ingredients in tortilla.

Can be fixed in advance and heated when you're hungry.

### Lentil Stew

*In pan, brown:*  
2 T olive oil  
3 cloves minced garlic  
2 c stew lamb or chicken, Set aside.

*Simmer until tender (40 min):*  
1 c French lentils  
3 c vegetable broth  
2 bay leaves  
1 tsp thyme

Add meat to lentil pot, and simmer along with the following spices for 1 hour.

Add sea salt and pepper to taste.

After the hour, add 1 bundle of kale and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes to reduce.

Serve warm.



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## Go-To Meals

Having a plan when you're busy or on the run is important; the key to eating well is having a plan in place so you don't have to think about it in the moment. Having 3 ideas for each meal will help you stay on track. Try to include meals that are simple to throw together or ones that you really enjoy preparing. Over time you may come up with creative variations to add to your repertoire. Be sure to check that each meal has protein, carbs, fat and fiber. Remember, there are no rules against eating dinner for breakfast and breakfast for dinner! The idea is to have some ideas that you don't have to think too much about.

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

### EXAMPLE MEALS

- Make oatmeal a more complete breakfast by adding nuts, fruit and protein powder.
- Protein shake: 1 C water, almond or coconut milk, 1/3 banana, 1/2 C berries, 1 scoop of protein powder and some ice; blend till smooth.
- Put salad dressing on chicken and bake it at 350; steam rice and broccoli to go with it. Chop up leftovers and put it in a wrap or tortilla for lunch the next day.

### EMERGENCY FOOD

- It's especially important to have options for times when you just don't have it in you to figure anything out.
- Identify some healthy store-bought frozen food options to have on hand.
  - Mac'n'Cheese with frozen peas and chicken or skip jack tune.
  - Mix a can of skip jack tuna with a can of artichokes, a little mayo and salt and pepper to taste.

### TIPS

- If you have more time to cook over the weekend, make extra and freeze it. If you know you're going to have a long day, take it out in the morning and then all you have to do is heat it up when you get home.
- Experiment with slow cookers. You can put everything in the cooker the night before and stash it in the fridge. Turn it on in the morning and come home to a dinner that's ready to eat!

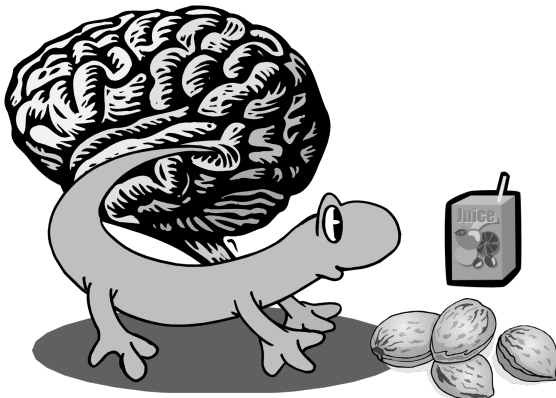
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## Three-Day Experiment: Protein Every Three Hours

- 7 AM**      **Breakfast:** (14 g protein) within an hour of waking two eggs, 1 piece of toast, one apple or pear
- 10 AM**      **Snack:** (6-7 g protein) ¼ cup of nuts: almonds, peanuts, cashews, and hazelnuts Or ¼ cup of cottage cheese Or 2 tbsp of nut butter - peanut, almond, and/or cashew
- 12-1 PM**      **Lunch:** (21 g protein) meat the size of a deck of cards This can be a sandwich, wrap, salad, or soup Plus 1 cup of veggies and/or 1 cup of whole, real grain - brown rice, quinoa, bulgur. Be sure that you consume a little bit of veggie fat - avocado, nut oil, and/or olive oil.
- 3 PM**      **Snack:** (6-7 g protein) ¼ cup of nuts: almonds, peanuts, cashews, and hazelnuts OR ¼ cup of cottage cheese OR 2 tbsp of nut butter - peanut, almond, and/or cashew
- 6 PM**      **Dinner:** (21 g protein) meat the size of a deck of cards This can be a sandwich, wrap, salad, or soup Plus 1 cup of veggies or 1 cup of whole, real grain - brown rice, quinoa, and/or bulgur Be sure that you consume a little bit of veggie fat - avocado, nut oil, and/or olive oil.
- Before Bed**      1-2 slices of turkey meat

### “Lizard Brain” Treat

- 1/4 cup of fruit juice or a ‘tot box’ of juice
- 1/4 cup of nuts (almonds, cashews, hazelnuts)



### Use the Lizard Brain for yourself or someone around you. Lizard Brain Treats:

- Slow down panic attacks.
- Take the edge off when someone is anxious, irritated, and/or agitated.
- Help angry people calm down more quickly.
- Help de-escalate conflicts.
- Help settle anxiety before public speaking or other stressful events.
- Address the issue of not being hungry for breakfasts (try keeping nuts and juice on your bed stand and eating the treat prior to getting out of bed).
- Give an immediate boost if you’ve gone too long (more than 4 hours) without eating.
- Stop the “3 AM committee meetings” (waking in the middle of sleep and being awake for a few hours) and help you get back to sleep more quickly.
- Help get cranky teenagers to engage in conversation.

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## Vegetables: The Basics

### *How much is enough?*

Even most people who consider themselves healthy eaters wouldn't claim to sit down and eat vegetables a minimum of 5 times a day. So how does anyone really eat the recommended 5 servings? The answer is in the definition of a 'serving'. One serving is equal to ½ cup, so in a day every person should eat 2½ cups of vegetables. While it is unrealistic for most people to plan 5 salads into a day, it is much easier to eat a large salad and a few pieces of broccoli.

#### **Four examples of a full day's worth of vegetables:**

1. A medium salad (2 cups, or the size of two yogurt containers) and 5 green beans
2. One large beet and a small salad (1½ cups)
3. One baked sweet potato and 6 sprigs of asparagus
4. Two large carrots and a stalk of celery

*See – it's not so hard!*

### **What Vegetables Have to Offer:**

**Fiber:** Among other things, vegetable fiber can lower cholesterol, help prevent colon cancer, stimulate production of important immune system mechanisms, stabilize blood glucose, decreased hunger signals throughout the day, and help in having regular bowel movements. Eating 5 servings of vegetables a day should give a person all the fiber they need to keep their body running healthily. Some of the best vegetable fiber sources are: corn, broccoli, collard greens, and spinach.

**Vitamins:** Vegetables are important sources of vitamins A, C, E, and K. Vitamin A is necessary for the formation of healthy tissue throughout the body. Vitamin C is necessary for immune system function and helps in the healing of injuries. It is a nutrient that the body cannot store on its own, and therefore needs to be constantly replenished. Vitamin E is an antioxidant that helps the growth of skin cells and the production of blood cells. Vitamin K is necessary for proper clotting of the blood.

**Minerals:** Magnesium, Potassium, and Phosphorous are among the most important minerals found in vegetables. **Magnesium** can help to relax nerves and muscles and is needed for circulation and bone building. Pumpkin seeds, spinach, and soy beans are all good sources of magnesium. **Potassium** is necessary for nerve and muscle function and can help lower high blood pressure. Swiss chard, yams, winter squash, and papaya are all good sources of potassium.

**Sense of Fullness:** Vegetables are low in fat and calories, but give a significant sense of fullness because of their high levels of fiber. It has been shown that a person's sense of fullness can last up 8 hours after consuming high-fiber foods. For this reason, a diet high in vegetables can be an effective way of limiting calorie and fat-intake without having to forgo the full stomach.

### **Easy Cooking with Vegetables:**

**Salad with Vinaigrette:** Mix 2 cups spinach or romaine lettuce with several slices of your favorite vegetables. Top with a mix of one tbsp olive oil and one tbsp balsamic vinegar.

**Roasted:** Slice several vegetables (yams, eggplant, carrots, zucchini, onions, or garlic) into ½ inch pieces. Toss in a light coating of olive oil, salt, pepper, and either lemon juice or balsamic vinegar. Cook at 450 degrees for 20-40 minutes till soft and golden. Serve with quinoa, couscous, or brown rice.

**Steamed:** Place carrots, asparagus, string beans, or other vegetable of choice in a covered, microwave safe container filled with ½ inch of water. Cook in microwave for 6-10 minutes or until soft.

**In Eggs:** Sauté onions and red peppers in pan until onions begin to brown. Add 2 beaten eggs to pan. When eggs are no longer runny, add spinach and sliced mushrooms. Top with light salt, pepper, and cheese.

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## ★ Vegetable and Fruit All-Starts ★

### Top 8 Vegetables:

1. **Spinach** High in vitamins K, A, C, B2, B6, B1, manganese, folate, magnesium, iron, calcium, potassium, tryptophan, and dietary fiber.
2. **Broccoli** High in C, K, A, folate, dietary fiber, manganese, and potassium.
3. **Bell Peppers** High in vitamins A, C, and B6.
4. **Beans** High in molybdenum, tryptophan, manganese, protein, iron, phosphorus, fiber, vitamin K, omega 3 fatty acids, and much more.
5. **Asparagus** High in vitamins K, A, C, B1, B2, and B6, folate, tryptophan, manganese, and fiber.
6. **Cabbage** A cruciferous vegetable (known for anti-carcinogenic effects) high in vitamins K & C .
7. **Sweet Potato** High in vitamins A and C.
8. **Carrots** Very high in vitamin A and high in vitamins K, C, and dietary fiber.

### Top 8 Fruits:

1. **Apples** Have high fiber and flavonoids. Easy to transport and snack on.
2. **Raspberries** (and other dark berries) High in antioxidants and manganese.
3. **Bananas** High in fiber, potassium, and vitamin B6.
4. **Grapes** High in flavonoids.
5. **Cantaloupe** High in vitamins A and C.
6. **Avocados** High in vitamin K, fiber, potassium, folate, and good, cholesterol-lowering fats.
7. **Oranges** High in vitamin C and easy to transport and snack on.
8. **Pineapple** High in bromelain (protein-digesting enzymes), manganese, and vitamin

## ★ *What will these vitamins and minerals do for me?* ★

**Dietary Fiber:** needed for bowel regularity. Lowers risk of diabetes and heart disease.

**Beta-Carotene:** an antioxidant that promotes cell communication and helps immune function.

**Vitamin C:** needed to form connective tissue, helps immune system.

**Antioxidants:** promote healthy cells and prevent disease and aging.

**Flavonoids:** protects blood vessels from rupture, prevents inflammation.

**Vitamin K:** needed for blood clotting.

**Vitamin B1:** involved in nervous system and muscle function.

**Vitamin B2:** needed for metabolic processes and energy production.

**Vitamin B6:** needed for neurotransmitter production.

**Folate:** could help prevent Alzheimer's, cancer, depression, and chronic fatigue.

**Calcium:** helps bone strength and muscle and nerve function.

**Iron:** needed for neurotransmitter production and prevents anemia.

**Magnesium:** helps circulation, prevents constipation, anxiety, and menstrual cramps.

**Manganese:** enzyme activator needed for cell function.

**Potassium:** needed for muscle and nerve function, and electrolyte balance. Lowers blood pressure.

For more nutritional information visit George Mateljan's website, *World's Healthiest Foods* at [whfoods.org](http://whfoods.org).

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Please consult with your doctor before changing your diet.

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## 24-Hour Diet Log

Write down all of the foods and liquids you have consumed in the last 24-hours.

### Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

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### Snack \_\_\_\_\_

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### Lunch \_\_\_\_\_

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### Snack \_\_\_\_\_

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### Diner \_\_\_\_\_

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### Snack/Dessert \_\_\_\_\_

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### Water \_\_\_\_\_

### Other liquids \_\_\_\_\_

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### Medications/Supplements \_\_\_\_\_

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Use this list to identify the main food groups of protein, veggies/fiber, fat, and carbs:

#### Protein:

- Meat (Poultry, Beef, Pork...)
- High protein yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Protein powder
- Fish
- Quinoa
- Tofu
- Beans
- Nuts

#### Veggies/Fiber:

- Carrots
- Bell peppers
- Artichoke
- Beets
- Quinoa
- Tomatoes
- Cabbage
- Lettuce
- Squash
- Beans

#### Fat:

- Butter
- Olive oil
- Nuts
- Coconut oil/milk
- Bacon
- Avocado

#### Carbohydrates:

- Bread
- Rice
- Muffins
- Sweets
- Pasta
- Potatoes
- Bagels

#### Other Liquids:

- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Tea
- Sodas

#### Medications/Supplements:

- Prescription medications
- Herbal supplements
- Recreational drugs (e.g., marijuana)

# Nutrition and Mental Health



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## Steps to Evaluating Food Labels

**STEP 1: Amount of Protein**  
How much protein is in a serving?

**STEP 2: Amount of Calories**  
How many calories per serving?

**STEP 3: Serving Size**  
How much counts as one serving? When you eat it, do you eat more or less than the listed amount? For example, a bottle of soda often has '2.5 servings' even though most consumers drink the entire bottle in one sitting. The nutrition facts provided are for the specified serving size and may need to be adjusted up or down.

**STEP 4: Calculating Carbohydrates**  
Use this equation to calculate carbohydrates:

- A. Total Carbs (g)
  - B. Dietary Fiber (g)
  - C. Insoluble Fiber (g)
- A - B - C = Carbs**

**STEP 5: Carbohydrate to Protein Ratio**  
Use the carb count from Step 4 to find the carb to protein ratio. E.g. **10g carbs:5g protein** is a **2:1** ratio.

Different people feel better eating different ratios. **For most people ratios of 1:1, 2:1, 3:1, and 4:1 are meals ratios. 5:1 ratio and above are dessert.**

Do experiments to see what ratio keeps you from being hungry 2, 3, and 4 hours later.

**Do you know what you are eating?**

**Do you believe the food industry knows about your individual health?**

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size	1 Bar (35g)
<b>Amount Per Serving</b>	
<b>Calories</b> 120	Calories from Fat 15
<b>% Daily Value*</b>	
<b>Total Fat</b> 2g	<b>3%</b>
Saturated Fat 0.5g	<b>3%</b>
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0.5g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	<b>0%</b>
<b>Sodium</b> 65mg	<b>3%</b>
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 24g	<b>8%</b>
Dietary Fiber 4g	<b>15%</b>
Soluble Fiber 1g	
Insoluble Fiber 3g	
Sugars 8g	
<b>Protein</b> 5g	
Vitamin A 0%	Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 0%	Iron 6%
*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:	
	Calories: 2,000 2,500
Total Fat	Less than 65g 80g
Sat Fat	Less than 20g 25g
Cholesterol	Less than 300mg 300mg
Sodium	Less than 2,400mg 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate	300g 375g
Dietary Fiber	25g 30g

**OUR TASTY INGREDIENTS:** ROLLED WHOLE GRAIN BLEND (HARD RED WHEAT, OATS, RYE, TRITICALE, BARLEY), BROWN RICE SYRUP, CHERRIES (CHERRIES, APPLE JUICE CONCENTRATE, RED TART CHERRY JUICE CONCENTRATE), SEMISWEET CHOCOLATE (EVAPORATED CANE JUICE, CHOCOLATE LIQUOR, COCOA BUTTER, SOY LECITHIN, VANILLA), SOY PROTEIN ISOLATE, SOY GRITS, EVAPORATED CANE JUICE CRYSTALS, CHICORY ROOT FIBER, EVAPORATED CANE JUICE SYRUP, HONEY, CORN FLOUR, EXPPELLER PRESSED CANOLA OIL, RICE STARCH, VEGETABLE GLYCERIN, OAT FIBER, EVAPORATED SALT.

**BLEND (WHOLE: HARD RED WHEAT, OATS, RYE, BARLEY, TRITICALE, BROWN RICE, BUCKWHEAT, SESAME SEEDS), NATURAL FLAVORS, MOLASSES, SOY LECITHIN, WHEY PROTEIN ISOLATE, ALMOND FLOUR, PEANUT FLOUR. CONTAINS CHERRIES AND MAY CONTAIN CHERRY PITS. CONTAINS WHEAT, SOY, MILK, ALMOND AND PEANUT INGREDIENTS. MAY CONTAIN OTHER TREE NUTS.**

**STEP 6: Types and Amounts of Fats**

Does the package say "No Trans Fats"? Check the ingredients for hydrogenated or partially-hydrogenated oils. Products without these are better choices. Note the industry is able to say zero when it is really 0.5 mg.

**STEP 7: Ingredients Evaluation**

Can you easily read all of the ingredients names? Do you know what they are? In general, the more ingredients you recognize as natural, the better. Some strange sounding ingredients (like riboflavin, or vitamin B2) are simply official names for naturally occurring vitamins. Be especially cautious of foods with high fructose corn syrup.

**STEP 8: Place in Your Diet**

This may be the most important part of reading labels: What purpose does this food serve in your diet? Is it a snack? Is it a meal? Is it a condiment? Is it entertainment (i.e. popcorn)? For example, it seems unreasonable to eat a 400 calorie nutrition bar as a snack but that same bar might be a good choice if it is a meal replacement.

**STEP 9: Do you like the taste.**

Does this satisfy you? Don't eat things you really don't like, but not everything has to be delicious. Let yourself experiment with new or different foods with the goal of making small improvements.

**MEAL: 1:1 to 3:1**  
Carb to Protein Ratio

**DESSERT: 4:1 to 6:1**  
Carb to Protein Ratio

**SUGAR CRACK: more than 6:1**  
Carb to Protein Ratio

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## Comparing Labels

Food Name	Serving Size	Protein	Total Carbs (TC)	Total Fiber (TF)	Calc. Carbs (TC-TF)	Calc. Carbs: Prot. Ratio	Notes



# Nutrition and Mental Health

## The Magic Pill is Physical Activity

Physical activity is essential for the body and mind to work well. Economists calculate that diseases, such as cardiovascular disease and depression, cost employers billions of dollars in work productivity and missed days of work. Disease could also limit your time spent with family, vacation time, lost income, hobbies, or ability to follow your childhood dreams. Additionally, lack of physical activity costs you money. By making time for physical activity in your life to prevent disease and improve your health, you can reduce the money you spend on health insurance, co-pays, medications, and supplements.

## What is your goal?

Improve:	Prevent/Reduce:
life expectancy	high blood pressure
quality of life	coronary heart disease
quality of sleep	colon cancer
daily moods	osteoporosis
effects of mental stress	weight gain and obesity
self-esteem	type II diabetes
health during menopause	depression
HDL (good) cholesterol level	anxiety
triglyceride level	Alzheimer's and dementia
bone density	
quality of life with a chronic disease	
quality of life with asthma	

## What do the studies show?

- Staying active, such as doing house hold chores and walking stairs, prolongs life.
- Moderate to vigorous activity for 150 minutes a week and a healthy diet can help to prevent high glucose disease, such as diabetes, and prevent weight gain.
- A mix of aerobic and resistance exercise, such as weight lifting, for 4 hours per week can help to prevent cardiovascular disease.
- Seven hours of exercise per week, including aerobic and resistance exercise, plus a healthy diet can help a person lose weight, maintain weight loss and prevent diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## Getting the Magic Pill to Work for You

*What activity would you like to try to improve your life?*

Brisk Walking	Skipping	Basketball	Bird Watching	Weight Lifting	Volleyball
Swimming	Yoga	Pilates	Kickball	Baseball	Softball
Rowing	Rock climbing	Canoeing	Kayaking	Sailing	Hiking
Cycling	Backpacking	Gyrotonics	Gardening	Dog walking	Aikido
Horseback Riding	Tai Chi	Qi Chong			

*I haven't been active in a while, how do I start up again?*

Move into a physically active life slowly. Take small steps.

- Get professional help from your medical doctor, naturopathic physician, physical therapist, or a personal trainer.
- Start by parking at the back of the parking lot, or a few blocks away from your destination.
- Walk up one flight of stairs per day. Add flights as time goes on.
- Go for a walk once a day. Start with a 5-minute walk, and add 5 minutes each week or at a rate that is comfortable to you.
- Set a goals in 3-month intervals.

### Develop a plan for physical activity

Take the time to write out a plan.

- What motivates you? Being social and with groups? Having to meet with someone? Having a consistent plan? Having variety? Being allowed to cheat?
- How much time can you commit? How many days of the week? How long each day? Do you have it written into your schedule?
- Can you integrate physical activity into your daily life?
- What degree of not meeting your ideal plan is OK?

### Find ways to increase physical activity

- Schedule time for physical exercise.
- Ask a friend to join you. This will give you more of a reason to keep the dates. It can also make the experience more enjoyable.
- Join a gym and/or get a personal trainer.
- Try new activities.
- Contact a local gym, YMCA, or Parks and Recreation for a list of activities or events.

### Notice how you feel after exercising

- **Appropriate amount of exercise for the present.** Physically tired and mentally relaxed after physical activity. The next day you may be a little sore but not physically or mentally tired.
- **Too much exercise for the present.** Physically and mentally tired. The next day sore and physically or mentally tired.
- **Time to seek help.** If you cannot find an exercise level that does not leave you tired the next day, seek the assistance of a doctor, physical therapist, or physical fitness trainer.

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## Getting Enough Sleep?

Sleep is vital to both physical and mental health. During sleep certain hormones are released that allow the body to recover and repair from daily use. Additionally, sleep is essential for mental and emotional regulation. Lack of sleep causes weight gain, attention problems, fatigue, and muscle pain, which can all lead to even more health problems.

### What causes sleep deprivation?

- Not allowing yourself 7-9 hours in bed. It takes time to fall asleep and to wake up. If you get in bed at 11:00 p.m. and wake up at 6:00 a.m., you are not actually getting 7 hours of sleep.
- Poor sleeping conditions such as too much noise or light, uncomfortable bed, uncomfortable room temperature, and others
- Emotional concerns that need examination and/or expression
- Use of caffeine, alcohol, and recreational drugs
- Eating habits that do not support glucose (brain food) control while sleeping
- Lack of physical activity during the day
- Sleep partner is waking you
- Snoring
- Jet lag/shift work
- Physical pain
- Sleep disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea
- Restless legs syndrome

### Signs of sleep deprivation

- Heavy-feeling body
- Heavy eyelids
- Slow breathing
- Cool body temperature
- Yawning
- Irritability
- Seeking stimulating activities
- Feeling bored
- Moodiness
- Fatigue

### Sleepy-time foods

- 1 c cottage cheese
- 1 slice turkey
- 2-3 T nut butter (cashew, almond)
- 1 avocado

Protein contains amino acids that will help you go to sleep, and the protein will give your brain the fuel to fast for 7-9 hours while you sleep. If you are having problems staying asleep, limit the sugars (bread, pasta, sugar) before you go to bed.

### Sleepy-time bath

Draw a hot bath and pour 2-4 c of Epsom salts into the bath to dissolve. Add a few drops of lavender or rose essential oil to the bath water. Light a candle. Soak in the bath until the water is almost tepid. While you relax, imagine a relaxing place or scenario, or listen to relaxing music. Dry off and go straight to bed.

### Sleepy-time teas

1. Try Celestial Seasonings' Sleepy Time Tea.
2. Make your own tea with ingredients from your local herb store or natural food store using equal parts of chamomile, oat straw, schisandra, and passion flower.

Steep 1 T tea in 1 c water.

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## *Help! Why can't I go to sleep?*

- Maintain a consistent sleep schedule. Try to get into bed at the same time every day, and plan on staying in bed for 7-9 hours.
- Remove objects that can disturb sleep, such as TVs, radios, and phones, from the bedroom.
- Make the room as dark and quiet as possible.
- Limit the activities done in bed to sleep, sex, and light reading (less than 30 minutes). This will train your body to associate sleep with the bed.
- Create a routine for the hour before you go to sleep so your body learns to expect to go to sleep. You can do quiet activities such as watching TV, drinking a cup of relaxing tea, reading, taking a bath. Try to limit stimulating activities such as preparing for the next day, cleaning, searching the internet, or playing video games.
- Consume no caffeine after noon.
- Try sleepy-time foods, teas, and bath.
- Notice the signs of sleepiness. When you begin to experience these, listen to your body and start going to bed.
- Try progressive relaxation: Try to imagine feeling heavier, having droopy eyelids, and slowness of breath.
- Monitor any anxious thoughts around bedtime. Write them down and, if possible, address them in the morning. Note patterns of what is worrying you and discuss these worries in a journal, with a friend, or with a trained mental health professional.

## *Agggghhhh! Why can't I stay asleep?*

- Is something waking you up? Try keeping track of certain sounds or changes in your surroundings (creaking doors, cold room, sounds or ambient light) that wake you up. If you can figure out what it is, you can try to make changes, so it no longer bothers you.
- Are you waking up to go to the bathroom? Limit water before bed or try acupuncture.
- You may be experiencing hypoglycemia (low blood glucose/sugar). If your brain is low on glucose, the body releases adrenaline to provide glucose. The adrenaline wakes you, and often starts the "should committee" talking in your head. Try eating protein 30 minutes before bed. This will help prevent hypoglycemia, so you won't wake up in the middle of the night with an adrenaline rush.
- Limit your alcohol to 0-1 servings of alcohol per day, and avoid drinking after dinner. Alcohol can also cause hypoglycemia.
- Imagine the signs of sleepiness, or try progressive relaxation.
- If you wake up, do not lie in bed and panic about not sleeping. Panic will not help you to go to sleep.
- After 20 minutes of trying to go to sleep, get up and relax yourself by trying sleepy-time foods, teas, or bath.

## *Mmmm...Why can't I get out of bed?*

- Are you getting 7-9 hours of sleep consistently? Try allowing more time for sleep.
- In the winter, you may naturally need more sleep, and you may need daylight to feel awake. Try "Daylight" light bulbs in your kitchen.
- Some people just need an hour to wake up. Try getting up and sitting and watching the world wake up.
- Do you have something in your day that you, personally, enjoy doing rather than just things you "should" do? Having something in your day that is meaningful to you makes it easier to wake up.

# Nutrition and Mental Health

## Adult Hope Scale

(Developed by Rick Snyder, 1991. Reference: Gwinn, C. and Hellman, C. (2019) *Hope Rising, How the Science of Hope Can Change Your Life*. Morgan James Publishing).

**Directions:** Read each item carefully.  
Using the scale shown below, please circle the number that best describes YOU.

Definitely True									
Mostly True									
Somewhat True									
Slightly True									
Slightly False									
Somewhat False									
Mostly False									
Definitely False									

1. I can think of many ways to get out of a jam. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
2. I energetically pursue my goals. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
3. I feel tired most of the time. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
4. There are lots of ways around any problem. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
5. I am easily downed in an argument. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
6. I can think of many ways to get the things in life that are important to me. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
7. I worry about my health. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9. My past experiences have prepared me well for my future. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10. I've been pretty successful in life. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
11. I usually find myself worrying about something. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
12. I meet the goals that I set for myself. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

### Agency/Willpower

Add scores for questions:

- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 9 \_\_\_\_\_
- 10 \_\_\_\_\_
- 12 \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_ (range: 4-32)

Higher scores reflect higher agency.

### Pathways/Waypower

Add scores for questions:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_ (range: 4-32)

Higher scores reflect higher pathways thinking.

### Total Hope Score

Add score for Agency and Pathways

Agency \_\_\_\_\_  
Pathways \_\_\_\_\_

**Total:** \_\_\_\_\_

Scores of 40-48 are hopeful,  
48-56 are moderately hopeful,  
56 or higher are high hope.

Research shows that Hope is made up of two qualities: Agency (or Willpower) and Pathways (or Waypower). Willpower is determined, in part, by your brain having enough fuel, or nutrients. Waypower is the ability to make small steps toward your goal and comes, in part, from having support to continue towards your goals. Use this scale to measure your Hope over time.



# Nutrition and Mental Health

