

OPTIMAL HEALTH UNIVERSITY™

Presented by Dr. Peter Hobson

Stress-Busting Foods

The boss, the deadlines, the traffic, the kids, the bills . . . the stress, and then, the french fries. When we're stressed, most of us turn to food for comfort. Unfortunately, most "comfort food" is high in unhealthy fats, sugar, starches and calories.

The good news? Turning to food is exactly what you should do when stressed, according to Dr. Hobson and nutritionists. The key is to choose nourishing, stress-busting foods in moderation.



Dr. Hobson is committed to helping patients adopt the *chiropractic lifestyle*, a way of life that focuses on preventing health problems — such as stress-related illness — rather than merely masking symptoms with medication.

In addition to helping patients identify what to munch on when the stressors of life begin taking their toll, Dr. Hobson also educates patients on which foods to avoid.

Read on to learn more about your nutritional allies in the battle against stress.

Stress Sabotages the Immune System

It may seem like the only health effect of stress is an occasional headache. But stress can actually have a serious and lasting impact on your health.

Hormones associated with stress, such as catecholamines and corticosteroids, weaken the immune system. And a weakened immune system leaves the body vulnerable to disease.

Stress may have physical triggers — exertion, heat, cold, accidental or surgical trauma and burns — or emotional instigators — anxiety, excitement and depression.

Scientific data consistently reveals that stress reduction and proper nutrition are vital to optimal health and disease prevention. Physical activity and other healthy lifestyle choices are also essential (*J Am Diet Assoc* 2002;102:1680-7).

Don't Stress: B Happy!

Dr. Hobson suggests patients reduce stress by fueling up on foods rich in B-complex vitamins. Scientific studies show that B vitamins combat the negative effects of physical and emotional stress on the body. (If you choose to take B supplements, remember that these vitamins work in synergy, so it's essential to take them in a complex form, rather than loading up on one isolated B vitamin.)

Stress-busting "Bs" include:

B₅ (pantothenic acid) — Abundant in red meats, chicken, fish, whole grains, eggs, broccoli and cauliflower, B₅ helps keep the immune system in top disease-fighting form.

B₁ (thiamine) — Bountiful in whole grains, egg yolks, fresh legumes and meat, B₁ helps the body metabolize food and alcohol. It also helps boost immune function.

B₂ (riboflavin) — Found in whole grains and organ meats, B₂ is necessary for energy production and oxygen utilization.

B₃ (niacin) — Like B₂, this vitamin is plentiful in organ meats and whole grains. It's also vital for the production of energy.

B₆ (pyridoxine) and folic acid — Fresh meats, fish, spinach, carrots, bananas and whole grains are rich in pyridoxine. Folic acid is copious in leafy greens, organ meats, oranges, legumes and whole grains. The real magic happens when pyridoxine and folic acid work together to keep homocysteine (a byproduct of broken-down protein) from damaging arteries and making them vulnerable to cholesterol deposits.

B₁₂ (cobalamin) — Gene function is dependent on this vitamin, found in fresh meat. So is energy production, the formation of blood cells and proper immunity.

Biotin — Plentiful in organ meats, egg yolks, whole grains and dairy foods (are you beginning to sense a pattern here?), biotin is vital for the metabolism of fat and protein. And, as an added benefit, it also boosts immunity.



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