

# 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:

**B<sub>5</sub> (pantothenic acid)** — Abundant in red meats, chicken, fish, whole grains, eggs, broccoli and cauliflower, B<sub>5</sub> helps keep the immune system in top disease-fighting form.

**B<sub>1</sub> (thiamine)** — Bountiful in whole grains, egg yolks, fresh legumes and meat, B<sub>1</sub> helps the body metabolize food and alcohol. It also helps boost immune function.

**B<sub>2</sub> (riboflavin)** — Found in whole grains and organ meats, B<sub>2</sub> is necessary for energy production and oxygen utilization.

**B<sub>3</sub> (niacin)** — Like B<sub>2</sub>, this vitamin is plentiful in organ meats and whole grains. It's also vital for the production of energy.

**B<sub>6</sub> (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.

**B<sub>12</sub> (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.



**Dr. Peter Hobson, Nerang: (07) 5527-3133 Browns Plains: (07) 3806 8686  
7 Price Street, Nerang, Queensland**

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## Can Chiropractic Adjustments Improve Well-Being?

*Doctors of chiropractic know that there's an intrinsic and inseparable connection between the body, the mind and the spirit. Your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic wants you to know that chiropractic care goes way beyond merely optimizing spinal function. Research suggests that chiropractic may also improve emotional health, including psychological well-being.*



### Psychic Downer

Your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic explains that, according to new research, a common malady known as **vertebral subluxation** may affect the psyche. Vertebral subluxation is linked to a wide range of physical health issues as well.

Vertebral subluxation is a condition in which spinal bones (vertebrae) have restricted mobility. It occurs when vertebrae are slightly out of place or not functioning properly. Chiropractors use specialized maneuvers, called **chiropractic adjustments**, to correct vertebral subluxations by restoring motion and spinal alignment.

### Vertebral Subluxations Inhibit Well-Being

Multiple studies indicate that well-being may be directly tied to vertebral subluxations.

In one report, researchers used two different assessments to measure well-being in an individual with chronic low-back pain. The 26-year-old female patient had multiple vertebral subluxations and low scores on two quality-of-life outcome measurements.

After nine months of chiropractic care, her vertebral subluxations were significantly reduced. Simultaneously, her well-being also improved. In an evaluation called "The Quality of Well-Being Scale," her score jumped from 1.1 to 8.2 after chiropractic care. Another well-being survey, which initially indicated low scores, exceeded normal values for well-being on five subscales. The mental health composite score on this assessment improved dramatically from 25.3 to 62.8.

"The patient appeared to experience improvement in quality of life while showing signs suggestive of improved spinal function. The relationship between indicators of vertebral subluxation and quality of life deserves further investigation using a research design that allows for exploration of possible causal relationships," summarize the scientists (*J Manipulative Physiol Ther* 2005;28:136-42).

### Chiropractic Lifestyle

Well-being is a key aspect of the *chiropractic lifestyle*: a conscious mode

of living that your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic encourages patients to embrace. It encompasses healthy choices for body and mind, including a nutritious diet, daily exercise, stress reduction, proper hydration and regular chiropractic care. Unlike medication with limited effectiveness, this lifestyle has proven positive long-term effects on well-being — all without side-effects.

When 205 volunteers attended a four-day health program, which mirrored principals of the chiropractic lifestyle, they enjoyed prolonged emotional benefit. The health retreat was designed to reduce vertebral subluxations, restore balance to the nervous system and provide lifestyle and nutritional education.

Patients completed a health survey and the Global Well-Being Scale just prior to the program, at its end — and then again eight weeks later. At the program's completion, all attendees showed "significant improvement" in the well-being assessment — and in six of eight scales on the health survey. Two months later, participants' scores for both tests remained higher than before the program (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2008;3:1-8).



**Dr. Peter Hobson & Dr. Ryan Blouin BSc. Hon., Hinterland Chiropractic**  
7 Price Street, Nerang, Qld 4211 (07) 5527-3133  
[www.GoldCoastChiropractor.com](http://www.GoldCoastChiropractor.com)

## Complete Well-Being

Research shows that chiropractic care affects all aspects of emotional well-being.

For instance, 10 volunteers participated in a five and one-half month study. All participants held stressful positions as public safety personnel at a fire and emergency services department — jobs that taxed their emotional health. As part of the experiment, the participants received weekly chiropractic care.

Participants completed a thorough quality-of-life survey at the study's onset and at its completion. The comprehensive evaluation included assessment of physical and emotional well-being, mental and emotional state, stress management, life enjoyment and overall quality of life.

At the end of the study, subjects enjoyed remarkable spine-related improvements, such as improved range of motion, spinal balance, tendon reflexes and posture. Concurrently, participants noted dramatic increases in all aspects of well-being (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2007;1-7).



## Depression

Vertebral subluxations may also be related to depression, speculate researchers.

In one report, a 46-year-old man sought chiropractic care during a third bout of depression. His depression medication caused multiple side-effects, such as dizziness, muscle weakness and insomnia. He suffered from neck and low-back pain, anxiety, fatigue and diminished appetite. His initial chiropractic exam revealed multiple vertebral subluxations.

The patient's doctor of chiropractic performed "specific chiropractic adjustments for the correction of vertebral subluxations." Throughout care, the patient routinely completed well-being assessments. As his care progressed, he enjoyed a "significant increase" in three well-respected quality-of-life scientific indicators.

The researchers concluded: "The progress that has been documented with this man suggests a connection between the correction of vertebral subluxations and increased wellness and quality of life." (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2008;4:1-7.)

## Anxiety

Analysis shows that anxiety may also be linked to vertebral subluxations.

In one report, a 19-year-old female was diagnosed with General Anxiety Disorder (GAD). For two years, she suffered from symptoms such as dizziness, trembling, sweating, heart palpitations, sleep deprivation, poor concentration, depersonalization and headaches. She was taking medication, but her symptoms continued to escalate, resulting in multiple emergency room visits.

A chiropractic evaluation revealed multiple, chronic vertebral subluxations and altered spinal curves in her neck and midback. Her chiropractor focused on eliminating vertebral subluxations to restore proper nerve function. "Improvement was noted after the first adjustment, 50% reduction in anxiety, 30% reduction in headache symptoms, and increased mobility in neck."

Over a four-month course of care, the patient experienced a remarkable jump in well-being and quality of life. She successfully discontinued medication, and her anxiety level remained reduced by 80 percent.

The study authors conclude that "these improvements suggest positive changes in mental health function [and] may be associated with subluxation correction from the application of chiropractic care." (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2004;1.)

## Long-Term Solution; Not a "Quick-Fix"

Unlike antidepressants and anti-anxiety drugs, chiropractic care and the chiropractic lifestyle is a long-term, all-natural approach to optimal well-being. Although medication may appear to be a "quick fix," drugs have potential side-effects. On the other hand, chiropractic care is a natural, highly effective solution to many health issues related to anxiety and depression, such as chronic pain. However, the chiropractic lifestyle is a lifelong commitment, and may take some time to spark drastic changes.

At the New Zealand School of Chiropractic training clinic, 89 patients rated their emotional health status initially and every eight weeks for five months after regular chiropractic care. Volunteers assessed health across four domains: emotional and mental state, stress, life enjoyment and physical health. A second survey ascertained quality of life. Participants noted changes in both areas after consistent chiropractic care.

The authors conclude that the chiropractic care provided "significant benefits" in well-being, not instantly, but over time. "Study data suggested that health/wellness may accrue with time under care." (*J Vert Sublux Res* 2008;3:1-9.)

## We're Here to Help

Maintaining a positive sense of well-being is essential for physical and emotional health. However, with today's frenzied pace of life, that's more challenging than ever before. Let us help you achieve emotional and physical wellness. We're here to listen and help!

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## Stress and Health

*Let's face it: Stress is a part of daily life. For many, a jam-packed schedule seems like a normal, essential part of a productive life.*

*If you're like most people, scheduling time to relax is on the backburner, or perhaps not even near the stove. However, research shows that finding time to unwind is vital: Stress has a profound effect on physical and psychological well-being.*

*Your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic warns patients that stress is linked to chronic ailments, such as Alzheimer's disease, heart disease and depression. Your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic has gathered research outlining just how stress affects health — as well as proven ways to relax.*



### The Chiropractic Lifestyle

Doctors of chiropractic, such as your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic, know that emotional and physical health are inextricably linked. That's why your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic educates patients about the **chiropractic lifestyle**, a mode of living that focuses on disease prevention through healthy choices for body, mind and spirit. Stress reduction is an integral part of this lifestyle.

### Banish Low-Back Pain

Low-back pain (LBP) and stress go hand-in-hand; both increase the risk for each other, according to multiple studies.

One analysis in Norway included 1,152 individuals, who ranged in age from 20 to 55. The study participants completed a health questionnaire, interview and stress measurement. Researchers then followed up 12 years later.

Individuals who initially reported earlier episodes of LBP and emotional stress were the most likely to develop a low-back disability. More than 11 percent (131 people) experienced disabling pain 12 years later.

The authors conclude that “persons with emotional distress but no earlier episodes of LBP had no increased risk for low back disability. Emotional distress is a predictor for low back disability in persons with earlier LBP, but not in persons without. To prevent low back disability, emotional distress should be considered and treated in persons with LBP.” (*Spine* 2007;32:269-74.)

Another investigation, which included 2,556 individuals and spanned almost seven years, found that stress at work was a chief risk factor for LBP. On-the-job stressors related to LBP differed for men and women.

“After adjustment for individual and physical risks, including occasional back pain at baseline, the prevalence rate of LBP in men is significantly related to baseline low decision latitude and low social support at work, and nonsignificantly to high job strain, low wage and job satisfaction, feeling stressed at work, and feeling depressed. High job insecurity, feeling stressed at work, and feeling depressed nonsignificantly increase the relative risks for LBP in women.” (*Spine* 2007;32:262-8.)

Of course, your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic can't remove stress in patients' lives; however, eliminating spinal dysfunction associated with stress is a primary function of chiropractic care. A variety of health disorders, including LBP, are associated with a common malady known as **vertebral subluxation**. This condition is characterized by areas of the spine where motion is limited, or spinal bones (vertebrae) are slightly out of place. Using specialized maneuvers, called **chiropractic adjustments**, your doctor at Hinterland Chiropractic corrects vertebral subluxations and accompanying dysfunction.

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[www.GoldCoastChiropractor.com](http://www.GoldCoastChiropractor.com)

## Address Alzheimer's Risks

Research shows that emotional factors, such as depression and anxiety, are strongly tied to the likelihood of developing Alzheimer's disease (AD).

In a three-year study including more than 600 seniors, psychological distress dramatically bolstered the odds of developing AD. Subjects completed an initial measurement of distress and anxiety. For the three following years, they completed annual assessments, containing 18 cognitive tests and a clinical classification of AD.

During the three years of follow-up, 55 people developed AD. The analysis, which controlled for age, sex and education levels, documented that subjects with a high level of distress were 2.7 times more likely to develop AD than those not prone to distress (*Neuroepidemiology* 2006;27:143-53).

## Engage in Exercise

Daily exercise is a winning stress-busting strategy. Carving out an hour per day for a structured workout will work wonders when it comes to slashing anxiety. However, even a shorter cardiovascular workout, such as a brisk 20-minute power walk, plummets stress levels. The good news is that exercise is cumulative, so small bursts throughout the day add up. For instance, opt for the stairs rather than the elevator — and park on the far side of parking lots.

Workouts, such as yoga, T'ai Chi or Pilates, that incorporate elements of stress reduction may be especially helpful.

## Seek and Savor Sleep

Research shows that adequate sleep is essential to optimal health. Missed sleep is linked with a myriad of disorders, including depression, anxiety, cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment and difficulty losing weight.

If you're having trouble getting enough zzz's, stress may be the primary suspect.

When researchers in Japan surveyed 3,435 workers, anxiety was the culprit in all forms of insomnia. Specifically, more than 12 percent of stressed-out individuals had difficulty falling asleep, 20 percent struggled to sleep through the night — and a startling 32 percent reported poor overall sleep quality. In addition, long-term stress, difficulty initiating sleep and trouble maintaining sleep were linked to illnesses or history of hospitalization (*Sleep Med* 2007;Epub).



## Call on a Confidant

Research reveals that relying on at least one supportive co-worker to listen and empathize dramatically reduces work-related stress and improves sleep quality (*Sleep Med* 2007;Epub).

Supportive networks outside of work are just as important. If you feel stress mounting, block out time to connect with someone who's upbeat and caring — even if it's just for a quick phone call.

## Promote Productivity

Many individuals are under the false impression that stress bolsters productivity.

However, research shows that, while a small dose of stress may initially spur efficiency, any more than a small amount will decrease productivity.

For instance, when researchers in Australia surveyed 1,523 participants from 10 diverse companies, high stress was one of the top factors that degraded

productivity (*Am J Health Promot* 2006;21:127-36).

## Quest for Quality of Life

Slashing stress is essential for optimal quality of life. When researchers from Turkey assessed 4,605 individuals, stress was the No. 1 factor associated with poor quality of life, especially for those with multiple diseases.

“The present study indicates significant adverse effects of chronic diseases and psychological distress on HRQL [health related quality of life] in adults, the effect of psychological distress being the most important.” (*Intern Med J* 2007;37:6-11.)

## Contemplate Counseling

If your stress seems to be consuming your life, consider counseling from a licensed professional. Therapy may be a helpful jumpstart to long-term stress reduction. Ask the doctor for a referral to a qualified professional in the community.

## Get Started!

As your partners in health, this chiropractic office wants you to enjoy a heightened level of wellness — starting now.

Start by making a list of the top five stressors in your life. For each stressor, identify one action step you can take to reduce or eliminate it.

And, make sure to maintain regular chiropractic checkups to combat the effects of stress on your spine and body.

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