

30+ MUST-HAVE FOODS FOR COPING WITH STRESS



MY
favourite
RECIPES



INCLUDES
14+ RECIPES TO DE-STRESS

Lina Cook

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& Ideal Portions

by Lina Cook

HOW OFTEN DO YOU HAVE A SELF-CHECK ON YOUR STRESS LEVELS?

This book is my commitment to empower others to harness the healing potential of food in order to combat stress and cultivate resilience.

If you are reading these lines, you are already one step ahead on your journey of being healthier and more in tune with yourself and your body.

Thank you for believing in yourself!



MEET LINA



A passionate nutrition coach dedicated to helping individuals navigate the challenges of modern-day stress through the power of food.

A mum of two, a lover of all natural, healthy and mindful, a true adventurer in search of balance between body and mind. Join me on a journey to rediscover balance, vitality, and inner peace through the transformative power of nutrition.

by Lina Cook

CHAPTER 1 UNDERSTANDING STRESS AND NUTRITION



by Lina Cook

WHY STRESS IS NOT A FRIEND

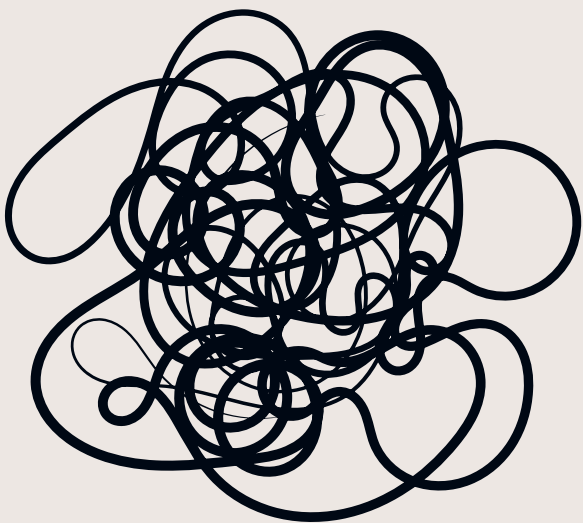
Well-being begins where stress ends, in the calm waters of self-care.

Statistically, stress levels worldwide have risen dramatically over the past 50 years.

According to a study published in the Journal of Psychiatric Research, the prevalence of stress-related disorders has increased by nearly 30% since the 1970s.

In today's fast-paced world, stress has become a common companion for many individuals, impacting their physical, mental, and emotional well-being. While stress itself is a natural response to challenging situations, prolonged or chronic stress can have detrimental effects on our health if left unmanaged.

This is where the role of nutrition comes into play.



3 'STRESS-FUL' FACTS

1

According to the American Psychological Association, chronic stress affects approximately 33% of Americans, leading to increased risks of cardiovascular diseases, anxiety disorders, and depression.

2

A study published in the Journal of Occupational Health revealed that job-related stress accounts for 13.3 million lost working days per year in the United States alone.

3

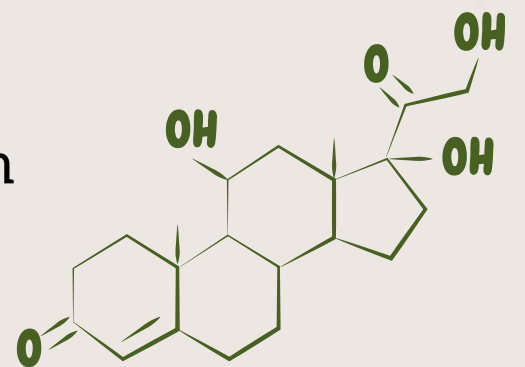
The World Health Organization estimates that stress-related disorders will be the second leading cause of disability worldwide by the year 2020, highlighting the significant impact of stress on global health.

WHY STRESS IS NOT A FRIEND

It's no secret that **what we eat** directly affects how we feel, both physically and emotionally. However, the connection between stress and nutrition is often overlooked.

When we're stressed, our bodies release hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, which can affect our appetite, food preferences, and metabolism. As a result, we may find ourselves reaching for comfort foods high in **sugar, fat, and refined carbohydrates**, which provide temporary relief but can ultimately exacerbate stress levels.

Fortunately, there are certain foods that possess stress-relieving properties and can help support our bodies during times of stress. These foods are rich in nutrients like **antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals**, which play key roles in modulating stress hormones, boosting mood, and promoting overall well-being.



4 TIPS ON HOW TO INCLUDE STRESS-REDUCING FOODS DAILY

1

Plan Ahead: Take some time each week to plan your meals and snacks, ensuring that you include a variety of stress-reducing foods.

2

Stock Up: Keep your kitchen stocked with stress-relieving staples like leafy greens, canned salmon, mixed nuts, and frozen berries.

3

Get Creative: Experiment with new recipes and cooking techniques to make eating healthy more enjoyable. Try adding leafy greens to smoothies, topping salads with nuts and seeds, or incorporating fatty fish into stir-fries.

4

Listen to Your Body: Pay attention to how different foods make you feel and adjust your diet accordingly. Choose foods that leave you feeling energized, satisfied, and nourished.

CHAPTER 2 DARK LEAFY GREENS



by Lina Cook

EMBRACING THE GREEN

Why Dark Leafy Greens are Your Ultimate Stress-Reliever

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, stress has become an all too common companion, affecting our physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Amidst this chaos, dark leafy greens emerge as our unsung heroes, offering a natural and effective solution to combat stress and promote overall wellness.

Dark leafy greens are nutritional powerhouses packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that can help combat stress and promote overall well-being. From spinach and kale to Swiss chard and collard greens, these vibrant veggies offer a myriad of health benefits to support your body during times of stress.



BENEFITS OF DARK LEAFY GREENS FOR STRESS RELIEF

According to recent data, there has been a notable increase in the consumption of dark leafy greens worldwide over the past decade. This trend reflects a growing awareness of the health benefits associated with these greens, particularly in combating stress and promoting mental resilience.

Research indicates that consuming at least 1.5 to 2 cups of leafy greens per day is associated with a significant reduction in the risk of chronic diseases, including heart disease, stroke, and certain types of cancer.

Studies have shown that regular consumption of leafy greens is linked to improved cognitive function.

According to research published in the Journal of Nutrition, Health & Aging, older adults who consumed one serving of leafy greens per day experienced a slower rate of cognitive decline compared to those who consumed leafy greens less frequently.

Specifically, individuals who consumed leafy greens daily demonstrated a 11% slower decline in cognitive function over a 5-year period compared to those who consumed leafy greens less than once per week.

BENEFITS OF DARK LEAFY GREENS FOR STRESS RELIEF

Eating your stress away only leads to more weight on your shoulders

Dark leafy greens are rich in magnesium, a mineral known to help relax muscles and calm the nervous system, thereby reducing stress levels. Additionally, they are loaded with folate, which supports the production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates mood and promotes feelings of happiness and relaxation.

Dark leafy greens

- contain the best sources of alkaline minerals (calcium, magnesium)
- are an excellent source of fibre
- have stress-relieving properties
- contain a lot of chlorophyll

☒ Main Leafy Greens to include in your Diet:

- ☒ Arugula, celery, cilantro, fennel, kale, dandelion,
- ☒ parsley, broccoli, spinach, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, asparagus, artichokes, green onions, leeks,
- ☒ lettuces, chicory, beet sprouts, lamb's lettuce

Chapter 2/Dark Leafy Greens

How do Calcium and Magnesium fit in the De-stress cycle?

- **Muscle Relaxation:** Calcium helps muscles contract, while magnesium aids in muscle relaxation. When the body is under stress, magnesium levels can become depleted, leading to muscle tension and discomfort. Ensuring adequate intake of both minerals can help promote relaxation and reduce physical symptoms of stress, such as muscle cramps and tension headaches.
- **Neurotransmitter Regulation:** Calcium and magnesium are involved in the regulation of neurotransmitters, chemicals that transmit signals in the brain. Magnesium, in particular, plays a role in the production and release of neurotransmitters like serotonin, which regulates mood and promotes feelings of relaxation and well-being.
- **Hormone Balance:** Calcium and magnesium are also involved in hormone regulation, including the stress hormone cortisol. Chronic stress can disrupt the balance of cortisol in the body, leading to increased feelings of anxiety and tension. They help support the body's ability to regulate cortisol levels and promote a balanced stress response.
- **Bone Health:** Calcium is well-known for its role in maintaining strong and healthy bones, but magnesium is also essential for bone health. Chronic stress can increase the risk of bone loss and osteoporosis by affecting calcium and magnesium metabolism.

WHY FIBRE helps De-stress?

- **Gut-Brain Connection:** Fibre-rich foods support a healthy gut microbiome, which plays a crucial role in regulating mood and stress response. The gut-brain axis, a bidirectional communication system between the gut and the brain, influences neurotransmitter production and immune function, both of which are linked to stress management.
- **Stabilizing Blood Sugar Levels:** High-fibre foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, help regulate blood sugar levels by slowing down the absorption of sugar into the bloodstream. Stable blood sugar levels can prevent energy crashes and mood fluctuations, reducing the likelihood of stress and irritability.
- **Promoting Satiety:** Fibre adds bulk to meals and slows down digestion, promoting feelings of fullness and satiety. This can prevent overeating and help maintain stable energy levels throughout the day, reducing the physical and emotional stress associated with fluctuations in hunger and energy.
- **Supporting Digestive Health:** Adequate fibre intake promotes regular bowel movements and supports digestive health. Constipation and other digestive issues can exacerbate feelings of discomfort and stress, while a healthy digestive system contributes to overall well-being and resilience to stress.

LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Spinach: High in iron and vitamin K, spinach also provides ample amounts of vitamin A and C, essential for immune function and skin health. Spinach is rich in vitamin C, an antioxidant that helps combat oxidative stress caused by free radicals in the body. Spinach is a good source of magnesium, a mineral that plays a key role in relaxation and stress reduction. Spinach provides essential B vitamins, such as folate, riboflavin, and niacin, which are involved in energy metabolism and neurotransmitter synthesis. Adequate intake of B vitamins supports the nervous system and helps maintain a positive mood during times of stress. It is also a good source of iron, which is important for maintaining healthy blood oxygen levels as iron deficiency can lead to fatigue and low energy, exacerbating feelings of stress and anxiety.



Kale: A powerhouse of nutrients, kale boasts high levels of vitamin C, calcium, and antioxidants like lutein and zeaxanthin, which support eye health. Kale is a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its relaxing properties. Kale contains vitamin B6, which plays a role in the production of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Dandelion: Dandelion greens are packed with antioxidants such as vitamin C and beta-carotene, which help combat oxidative stress and reduce inflammation in the body.

Dandelion root has been used to support liver health and detoxification, essential for eliminating toxins from the body, especially during times of stress when the body may be under increased strain.

Dandelion greens are a good source of B vitamins, including folate, riboflavin, and niacin, which play a role in energy metabolism and the production of neurotransmitters involved in mood regulation. Adequate intake of B vitamins can help support mental and emotional well-being during times of stress.



Celery: Celery contains antioxidants such as vitamin C, beta-carotene, and flavonoids, which help combat oxidative stress and reduce inflammation in the body. Celery is a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its calming effects on the nervous system. Magnesium helps regulate neurotransmitters and can help alleviate symptoms of stress, anxiety, and insomnia.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

It, as arugula, is a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its calming effects on the nervous system. Celery is composed of about 95% water, making it a hydrating snack option. Proper hydration is essential for maintaining optimal bodily functions, including stress management. Dehydration can exacerbate stress and fatigue, so staying well-hydrated with water-rich foods like celery can help support overall well-being.

Cilantro: Cilantro, also known as coriander leaves, offers several potential benefits for stress relief as it's packed with antioxidants such as vitamin C and beta-carotene, which help combat oxidative stress and reduce inflammation in the body. By neutralizing free radicals, these antioxidants support cellular health and resilience to stress. It contains essential oils such as linalool and geranyl acetate, which have been studied for their calming and stress-reducing properties. Cilantro has been shown to have chelating properties, meaning it may help remove heavy metals and toxins from the body and reduce the burden of stress on the body's systems. It is a good source of vitamin K, which plays a role in bone health and may help reduce the risk of fractures associated with stress-related conditions such as osteoporosis.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Swiss Chard: Rich in potassium and magnesium, Swiss chard also contains vitamins A, K, and C, making it an excellent choice for bone and heart health. Swiss chard is a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its calming properties. Swiss chard is rich in vitamin C, an antioxidant that supports the adrenal glands and helps regulate cortisol levels, the body's primary stress hormone. Swiss chard provides essential B vitamins, such as folate, riboflavin, and niacin, which play a role in energy metabolism and neurotransmitter synthesis. Adequate intake of B vitamins supports the nervous system and helps maintain a positive mood during times of stress.



Collard Greens: Packed with vitamin K and calcium, collard greens are also a good source of fibre, promoting digestive health and satiety. They are a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its relaxation properties. Collard greens contain various phytonutrients, including flavonoids and carotenoids, which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. These compounds help protect cells from oxidative damage caused by stress and support overall cellular health.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Arugula: Arugula, also known as rocket or roquette, is a nutrient-rich leafy green vegetable that offers several potential benefits for stress relief. Arugula is a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its calming effects on the nervous system. Arugula contains vitamin C, an antioxidant that helps combat oxidative stress and reduce inflammation in the body. It is packed with phytonutrients such as chlorophyll, flavonoids, and glucosinolates, which have been shown to have anti-inflammatory and anti-stress properties.



Fennel: Fennel contains a compound called anethole, which has been studied for its potential stress-relieving effects. Anethole may help modulate neurotransmitter activity in the brain, leading to a reduction in stress and anxiety levels. Fennel is also a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its calming properties. It is a good source of vitamin C, an antioxidant that supports adrenal gland function and helps regulate cortisol levels, the body's primary stress hormone.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Broccoli: Broccoli is an excellent source of vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that supports adrenal gland function and helps regulate cortisol levels, the body's primary stress hormone. Broccoli is rich in dietary fibre, which promotes digestive health and helps regulate blood sugar levels. A healthy digestive system and balanced blood sugar can contribute to overall well-being and resilience to stress. It is rich in magnesium, so well known now for its calming properties and contains a compound called sulforaphane, which may help protect the body against the harmful effects of stress by modulating stress-related pathways in the body and promoting cellular resilience.



Parsley: Parsley is packed with antioxidants, including flavonoids, carotenoids, and vitamin C, which help combat oxidative stress caused by free radicals in the body. Parsley is also an excellent source of vitamin K, which plays a crucial role in brain health and function. It contains volatile oils that have been shown to have mood-boosting properties. These oils may help reduce anxiety and promote relaxation, contributing to improved stress management and mental health.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Cabbage: Cabbage contains various phytonutrients with anti-inflammatory properties, which can help reduce inflammation in the body caused by stress. It is rich in dietary fibre, which promotes digestive health and helps regulate blood sugar levels. A healthy digestive system and balanced blood sugar can contribute to overall well-being and resilience to stress. Cabbage is a good source of vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that supports adrenal gland function and helps regulate cortisol levels and it also provides vitamin K, which is essential for brain health and cognitive function.



Brussels sprouts: Brussels sprouts contain folate, B vitamin that plays a role in neurotransmitter synthesis and helps regulate mood. They contain alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), a type of omega-3 fatty acid with anti-inflammatory properties. Consuming omega-3 fatty acids may help reduce inflammation in the body caused by stress and support overall well-being. They are an excellent source of vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant that supports adrenal gland function and helps regulate cortisol levels.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Asparagus: Asparagus is a rich source of folate, vitamin that plays a crucial role in neurotransmitter synthesis, including serotonin and dopamine, which are involved in mood regulation. Adequate folate intake has been associated with improved mental health and may help reduce symptoms of stress and anxiety. Asparagus is packed with antioxidants, including vitamins A, C, and E, as well as glutathione, which help protect cells from oxidative stress and damage.



Artichokes: Artichokes are packed with antioxidants, including vitamin C, vitamin E, and phytonutrients such as cynarin and silymarin. These antioxidants help neutralize harmful free radicals in the body, reducing oxidative stress and inflammation associated with stress. Artichokes are a good source of magnesium, an essential mineral that plays a crucial role in stress management and relaxation. They are low in calories and fat but rich in essential nutrients, and maintaining a healthy weight can positively impact mental health and stress resilience.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Green onions: Green onions are a natural source of choline, an essential nutrient that plays a role in neurotransmitter synthesis. Choline is involved in the production of acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that supports mood regulation and cognitive function. Adequate choline intake may help reduce feelings of stress and anxiety. They are also rich in antioxidants and are a good source of vitamin K, which plays a role in brain health and may help improve cognitive function.



Leeks: Leeks contain antioxidants like polyphenols and flavonoids, which help combat oxidative stress in the body, reducing inflammation and promoting overall well-being. Adequate intake of vitamin C-rich foods, like leeks, can help support the body during times of stress. Magnesium is a mineral that helps relax muscles and regulate neurotransmitters, promoting a sense of calmness and relaxation. Leeks contain magnesium, contributing to stress relief and improved sleep quality.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Lettuce: Lettuce has a high water content, which helps keep the body hydrated. Dehydration can exacerbate feelings of stress and fatigue, so staying hydrated with water-rich foods like lettuce can help support overall well-being. Lettuce contains magnesium, a mineral known for its calming properties. Lettuce contains vitamin C, an antioxidant that helps combat oxidative stress in the body. Adequate intake of vitamin C-rich foods can support the immune system and reduce the negative effects of stress.



Chicory: Chicory offers several benefits that can aid in stress relief. It contains compounds like intybin and lactucin, which have mild sedative effects. These compounds can help promote relaxation and reduce feelings of anxiety and stress. Chicory is known to support liver function and promote detoxification. A healthy liver is essential for managing stress hormones like cortisol and maintaining overall well-being. Chicory is a good source of antioxidants, including vitamin C and flavonoids. can be used as a caffeine-free alternative to coffee, soothing without the effect of caffeine.

LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

Beet sprouts: Beet sprouts are packed with essential nutrients, including vitamins A, C, and K, as well as minerals like potassium and magnesium. These nutrients support overall health and can help combat the negative effects of stress on the body. Beet sprouts contain betalains, which are pigments with powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. Consuming foods rich in betalains can help reduce inflammation in the body, which is often heightened during periods of stress. The high potassium content in beet sprouts can help regulate blood pressure levels, promoting cardiovascular health. Beet sprouts are a good source of natural sugars and carbohydrates, providing a quick energy boost. Maintaining stable energy levels can help combat feelings of fatigue and lethargy often associated with stress.



Lamb's lettuce:

Lamb's lettuce, also known as corn salad or mâche and is a good source of magnesium, a mineral known for its calming effect on the nervous system. Lamb's lettuce is rich in vitamin C, a powerful antioxidant and contains small amounts of omega-3 fatty acids, which have been linked to reduced inflammation and improved mood.



LEAFY GREENS AND SERVINGS

TIPS

- Choose the greens that you prefer or you are used to consume so that you can enjoy your meals.
- Choose at least 5 leafy greens and add them to your shopping list.
- Choose at least 1 new vegetable of this group per week and keep adding to your list.
- Consume 2 cups of cooked or 1 cup of raw greens
- Eat your greens twice a day (mostly at lunch & dinner).

How?

- Add a handful of fresh spinach or kale to your morning smoothie for a nutrient boost.
- Use collard greens or Swiss chard leaves as wraps for sandwiches or tacos, replacing traditional tortillas or bread.
- Sauté spinach or kale with garlic and olive oil as a simple and flavourful side dish.
- Incorporate dark leafy greens into salads, soups, stir-fries, and pasta dishes for added nutrition and vibrant colour.



LEAFY GREENS RECIPES

15-min ideas and recipes to help
you reap the stress-relieving
benefits of Leafy Green Veg

Lina Cook

@DRAWASTARTODAY





NOT-SO CLASSIC GARDEN SALAD



Ingredients:

- Mixed greens (lettuce, spinach, arugula)
- Cherry tomatoes
- Cucumber (optional)
- Avocado
- Sunflower seeds
- Balsamic vinaigrette

How to make:

1. Toss mixed greens with sliced cherry tomatoes, diced cucumber (optional), and chopped avocado.
2. Sprinkle sunflower seeds on top
3. Drizzle with balsamic vinaigrette and extra virgin olive oil.
4. Enjoy in the sun, by the fire, with a friend or a family member; as a main snack or lunch or as a side dish.

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.



MEDITERRANEAN CHICKPEA SALAD



Ingredients:

- Baby spinach
- Chickpeas
- Kalamata olives
- Crumbled feta cheese
- Pomegranate seeds
- Lemon tahini dressing

How to make:

1. Combine baby spinach with chickpeas, diced red bell pepper, diced cucumber, if any.
2. Add the Kalamata olives.
3. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds
4. Top with crumbled feta cheese and drizzle with lemon tahini dressing.
5. Enjoy! Enjoy ! Enjoy!

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.



BERRY BLISS SPINACH SALAD



Ingredients:

- Baby spinach,
- Fresh strawberries (sliced) and /or blueberries
- Goat cheese crumbles
- Walnuts,
- Raspberry vinaigrette or simply extra virgin olive oil

How to make:

1. Combine baby spinach with sliced strawberries and/or blueberries.
2. Sprinkle some goat cheese crumbles, and walnuts.
3. Drizzle with raspberry vinaigrette dressing and or extra virgin olive oil.
4. Even though the mix of flavours may seem slightly odd, this is such a delightful salad you will surely enjoy.

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.



CITRUS AVOCADO SALAD



Ingredients:

- Mixed greens (spinach, arugula, kale)
- Avocado (sliced)
- Orange segments,
- Almonds or walnuts
- Feta cheese crumbles
- Chia seeds
- Citrus vinaigrette/Extra virgin Olive Oil

How to make:

1. Toss mixed greens with sliced avocado, orange segments, almonds or walnuts of your choice
2. Add some feta cheese crumbles.
3. Drizzle with citrus vinaigrette or/and extra virgin olive oil.
4. Add a dash of cinnamon or some chia seeds.
5. Serve and enjoy as a snack, for lunch or as a side dish.

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.

CHAPTER 3 FATTY FISH OMEGA 3 POWERHOUSE



by Lina Cook

IMPORTANCE OF OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS IN REDUCING STRESS

Supporting optimal brain function and heart health

Omega-3 fatty acids are essential nutrients known for their powerful anti-inflammatory properties and their role in brain health. Research suggests that omega-3s can help reduce stress and anxiety by regulating neurotransmitter function and promoting overall brain health. Incorporating omega-3-rich foods like fatty fish into your diet can support a healthy stress response and improve mood and well-being.



WHICH FISH IS RICH IN OMEGA 3

Good fats are nourishment for the mind, calming the storms of stress.

Fatty fish is an excellent sources of omega-3 fatty acids.

These fish:

- contain high levels of EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and
- DHA (docosahexaenoic acid)

two types of omega-3s with potent anti-inflammatory and mood-balancing effects.

Including fatty fish in your diet regularly can help boost omega-3 levels and support your body's natural stress response.

Main Types of Fish Rich in Omega 3 to include in your Diet:

- ☒ Salmon
- ☒ Mackerel
- ☒ Sardines
- ☒ Trout

FATTY FISH AND SERVINGS

TIPS

- **Choose Fatty Fish High in Omega-3s:** Opt for fish such as salmon, mackerel, sardines, trout, and herring, which are rich sources of omega-3 fatty acids EPA and DHA.
- **Select Fresh, Wild-Caught Fish:** Whenever possible, choose fresh, wild-caught fish over farmed varieties. Wild-caught fish tend to have higher omega-3 content and fewer contaminants.
- Aim to include fatty fish in your diet **at least twice a week** to meet your omega-3 needs.
- **Watch Portion Sizes:** A serving of fish is typically around 2-4 ounces/100-120 grams, which is roughly the size of a deck of cards. Aim to consume one serving of fatty fish per meal to maintain a balanced intake.
- **Balance Omega-3 Intake:** While omega-3s are beneficial, it's essential to maintain a balance with omega-6 fatty acids. Aim for a ratio of omega-6 to omega-3 fatty acids of around 4:1 to 1:1 for optimal health.



FATTY FISH RECIPES

15-min ideas and recipes to help
you reap the stress-relieving
benefits of Omega-3 rich fish

Lina Cook

@DRAWASTARTODAY





SALMON AND AVOCADO SALAD

Ingredients:

- 2 salmon fillets
- 1 avocado, sliced
- 2 cups mixed salad greens
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

How to make:

1. Season the salmon fillets with salt and pepper to taste.
2. Heat olive oil in a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat.
3. Place the salmon fillets in the skillet, skin-side down, and cook for 3-4 minutes on each side, or until cooked through and flaky.
4. While the salmon is cooking, prepare the salad by arranging the mixed greens on a serving platter and top with sliced avocado.
5. Once the salmon is cooked, let it cool for a few minutes and place it on top of the salad.
6. In a small bowl, whisk together the lemon juice, salt, and pepper to make the dressing and drizzle and toss to mix.
7. Add pine or flax seeds and a slice of grapefruit.
8. Serve immediately as a light and nutritious meal!

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.



GRILLED SALMON WITH LEMON AND DILL

Ingredients:

- 2 salmon fillets
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 1 tablespoon fresh dill, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Lemon wedges for serving

How to make:

1. Preheat your grill to medium-high heat.
2. Brush the salmon fillets with olive oil and season with salt and pepper.
3. Place the salmon fillets on the grill, skin side down, and top each fillet with a couple of lemon slices.
4. Grill the salmon for about 5-7 minutes per side, or until cooked through and flaky.
5. Sprinkle the chopped dill over the grilled salmon and serve with lemon wedges on the side.
6. Enjoy this flavourful and nutritious grilled salmon dish with your favourite side dishes!

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.



MACKEREL SALAD WITH GREENS, BEETROOT, AND CASHEWS

Ingredients:

- 1 can mackerel fillets, drained and flaked
- 2 cups mixed greens (such as spinach, arugula, and kale)
- 1 medium beetroot, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup cashew nuts
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste

How to make:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the mixed greens and thinly sliced beetroot.
2. Add the flaked mackerel fillets on top of the greens and beetroot.
3. In a small skillet, dry roast the cashew nuts over medium heat until lightly golden and fragrant, about 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat and let them cool slightly.
4. Sprinkle the toasted cashew nuts over the salad.
5. In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil and balsamic vinegar to make the dressing. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
6. Drizzle the dressing over the salad just before serving and toss gently.
7. Serve immediately as a nutritious and flavorful meal or side dish.

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.

CHAPTER 4 NUTS & SEEDS



by Lina Cook

NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS OF NUTS AND SEEDS FOR STRESS MANAGEMENT

Supporting optimal brain function and heart health

Nuts and seeds are nutritional powerhouses packed with essential nutrients that play a vital role in managing stress. They are rich in healthy fats, protein, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, all of which contribute to overall well-being and resilience against stress.

For example, nuts like almonds and walnuts are high in magnesium and vitamin E, which have been linked to reduced stress levels and improved mood.

Seeds such as pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds provide a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, which help combat inflammation and promote brain health, essential for stress management.



VARIETIES OF NUTS AND SEEDS AND THEIR STRESS-RELIEVING PROPERTIES

There is a wide variety of nuts and seeds, each with its unique composition of nutrients that offer specific stress-relieving properties.

Why Nuts & Seeds are your stress-relief 'go-to friend'. They:

- relax muscles and regulate mood (calcium, magnesium)
- support brain function and reduce inflammation, associated with stress - rich in Omega - 3 fatty acids
- are rich in essential minerals for maintaining a healthy immune system and managing stress response (zinc)
- have great antioxidant properties that protect cells from oxidative stress caused by free radicals (Vitamin E)

Nuts and Seeds to include in your Diet:

- ☒ Almonds, Walnuts,
- ☒ Pistachios, Cashew Nuts,
- ☒ Pumpkin Seeds, Sunflower Seeds,
- ☒ Flaxseeds, Chia seeds

Chapter 4/Nuts & Seeds

Next time you feel overwhelmed, reach for a handful of nuts & let their stress-relieving properties work their magic.

✓ **Almonds:** Rich in magnesium, almonds help regulate cortisol levels, reducing stress and promoting relaxation. Almonds are also packed with vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant that helps combat oxidative stress in the body.



✓ **Walnuts:** Walnuts are one of the richest plant-based sources of omega-3 fatty acids, particularly alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). Omega-3s play a crucial role in brain health and mood regulation, helping to reduce inflammation and lower stress levels. Walnuts provide a moderate amount of protein, which helps stabilize blood sugar levels and prevent energy crashes associated with stress.



✓ **Pistachios:** These nuts contain vitamin B6, which plays a crucial role in the synthesis of neurotransmitters like serotonin and dopamine. They are rich in magnesium, a mineral known for its calming effects on the nervous system.



✓ **Cashews:** Cashews are a good source of zinc, which plays a role in regulating mood and reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety.



Chapter 4/Nuts & Seeds

✓ **Sunflower Seeds:** Sunflower seeds are rich in tryptophan, an amino acid that helps produce serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates mood and reduces stress.



✓ **Flaxseeds:** Flax seeds are rich in alpha-linolenic acid (ALA), a type of omega-3 fatty acid known for its anti-inflammatory and mood-stabilizing effects. Flax seeds are an excellent source of dietary fibre that promotes healthy gut which is closely linked to mood and stress levels.



✓ **Chia Seeds:** Chia seeds are an excellent plant-based source of omega-3 fatty acids, particularly alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). Omega-3 fatty acids play a crucial role in brain health and neurotransmitter function, helping to reduce inflammation and promote a sense of calm and well-being.



✓ **Pumpkin Seeds:** Loaded with magnesium, pumpkin seeds promote relaxation and calmness by regulating neurotransmitters in the brain. Pumpkin seeds are also high in zinc, another essential mineral involved in stress response and immune function. They also contain tryptophan, an amino acid precursor to serotonin, a neurotransmitter that regulates mood and promotes feelings of relaxation and well-being.



NUTS & SEEDS AND SERVINGS

TIPS

- **Incorporate a diverse range of nuts and seeds into your diet**, including almonds, walnuts, pistachios, flaxseeds, chia seeds, pumpkin seeds, and sunflower seeds. Each type offers unique nutritional benefits.
- **Choose unsalted and un-roasted** nuts and seeds whenever possible to minimize added sodium and preserve their natural nutrients. Raw or dry-roasted varieties are the best options.
- **Watch Portion Sizes:** Nuts and seeds are calorie-dense foods, so it's essential to watch your portion sizes. Aim for a small handful (about 1 ounce or 28 grams) as a serving, which is roughly equivalent to a quarter cup and a total of 7-10 servings (7-10 ounces or 196-280 grams) per week.
- Add nuts and seeds to **salads, yogurt, oatmeal, smoothies, or stir-fries** for extra crunch and nutrition. They can also be enjoyed as a standalone snack between meals.



NUTS & SEEDS RECIPES

15-min ideas and recipes to help
you reap the stress-relieving
benefits of nuts and seeds

Lina Cook

@DRAWASTARTODAY





NUT BUTTER TOAST

Ingredients:

- 1/2 slices of wholegrain bread/toasted or fresh
- 1/2 banana
- 1/3 cup of blueberries
- 1 cup of good mood
- a dash of cinnamon/chia seeds for a healthy heart

How to make:

1. Spread almond butter or peanut butter on whole-grain toast
2. Top with sliced bananas for a nutritious and filling snack.
3. Add a dash of colour with my best antioxidant power bombs - blueberries (freshly picked or from frozen).
4. Flavour everything with kindness.
5. Serve fresh with smile.
6. Enjoy!

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.



HOMEMADE GRANOLA BARS

Ingredients:

- 2 cups rolled oats
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts (such as almonds, walnuts, or pecans)
- 1/4 cup seeds (such as pumpkin seeds or sunflower seeds)
- 1/4 cup honey or maple syrup
- 1/4 cup dried fruits (such as raisins, cranberries, or chopped apricots)
- 1/4 cup nut butter (such as almond butter or peanut butter)
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt (optional)

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.

How to make:

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the rolled oats, chopped nuts, seeds, and dried fruits.
2. In a small saucepan, heat the honey and nut butter over low heat until melted and well combined. Stir in the vanilla extract and salt, if using.
3. Pour the honey and nut butter mixture over the dry ingredients in the mixing bowl. Stir until everything is evenly coated.
4. Line a baking dish with parchment paper or lightly grease it with oil. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish and press it down firmly with the back of a spoon or your hands to form an even layer.
5. Place the baking dish in the refrigerator for about 1 hour, or until the granola mixture is set.
6. Once set, remove the granola mixture from the refrigerator and cut it into bars or squares using a sharp knife.
7. Store the homemade granola bars in an airtight container at room temperature for up to one week, or refrigerate for longer storage.



HONEY NUT YOGURT PARFAIT

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup Greek yogurt
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoons chopped almonds
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds
- 1/4 cup fresh berries (optional)

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.

How to make:

1. In a small bowl, mix the Greek yogurt and honey until well combined.
2. Layer half of the yogurt mixture into a serving glass or bowl.
3. Sprinkle half of the chopped almonds, walnuts, and pumpkin seeds over the yogurt layer.
4. Repeat the layering process with the remaining yogurt mixture and nuts/seeds.
5. If desired, top the parfait with fresh berries for extra sweetness and flavor.
6. Serve immediately or refrigerate for a few minutes before enjoying this delightful and nutritious yogurt parfait!



NUTTY TRAIL MIX

Ingredients:

- 1/4 cup almonds
- 1/4 cup cashews
- 1/4 cup pumpkin seeds
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 1/4 cup dark chocolate chips
- 1/4 teaspoon sea salt (optional)

How to make:

1. In a mixing bowl, combine the almonds, cashews, pumpkin seeds, dried cranberries, and dark chocolate chips.
2. If desired, sprinkle a pinch of sea salt over the mixture for added flavor contrast.
3. Toss everything together until evenly distributed.
4. Transfer the nutty trail mix to an airtight container or portion it into snack-sized bags for convenient on-the-go snacking.
5. Enjoy this tasty and energizing trail mix whenever you need a quick pick-me-up throughout the day!

CHAPTER 5 BERRIES



by Lina Cook

BERRIES – STRESS-RELIEVING SUPERFOODS

*Berries aren't just nature's candy;
they're the superheroes of the fruit world*

Berries are packed with antioxidants, such as vitamin C, flavonoids, and polyphenols, which help combat oxidative stress in the body.

These antioxidants protect cells from damage caused by free radicals, which can contribute to stress and inflammation.

Scientific studies have shown that consuming just one serving of berries per day, which is typically around 1 cup, can significantly improve cognitive function and memory in older adults.

This is attributed to the high levels of antioxidants and phytochemicals found in berries.



TYPES OF BERRIES AND THEIR STRESS-REDUCING BENEFITS

BLUEBERRIES



Blueberries are renowned for their stress-relieving properties due to their high antioxidant content, particularly anthocyanins, which help combat oxidative stress in the body. Additionally, blueberries contain compounds that may enhance serotonin production, promoting feelings of relaxation and well-being.

Did you know?

-  Blueberries are one of the richest sources of antioxidants (about 10 x richer than any other fruit & vegetables), making them an excellent choice for overall health.
-  Wild blueberries, which grow in acidic soil, tend to have a higher antioxidant content than cultivated varieties.
-  Blueberries are low in calories and high in fibre, making them a satisfying and nutritious snack for weight management and digestive health.

TYPES OF BERRIES AND THEIR STRESS-REDUCING BENEFITS

STRAWBERRIES



Strawberries are not only delicious but also offer stress-relieving benefits thanks to their high vitamin C content, which helps combat the effects of stress on the body by supporting the adrenal glands.

High in vitamin C, strawberries help regulate cortisol levels, the hormone associated with stress, and boost the immune system. Additionally, strawberries contain phytochemicals like anthocyanins, which have been linked to improved mood and cognitive function.

Did you know?



Despite their sweet taste, strawberries are relatively low in sugar compared to many other fruits, making them a great option for those watching their sugar intake.



Strawberries are packed with antioxidants, including vitamin C, anthocyanins, and quercetin, which help protect cells from oxidative damage and inflammation.



The seeds on the outside of strawberries are actually the fruit's ovaries and are perfectly safe to eat, providing additional dietary fibre and nutrients.

TYPES OF BERRIES AND THEIR STRESS-REDUCING BENEFITS

BLACKBERRIES



Blackberries are rich in antioxidants, particularly vitamin C and anthocyanins, which can help reduce stress by combating inflammation and oxidative stress in the body.

Additionally, blackberries contain fibre, which supports digestive health and may indirectly contribute to stress management by promoting a healthy gut microbiota.

Did you know?



Blackberries are packed with vitamin K, which plays a crucial role in bone health and blood clotting. **Just one cup of blackberries provides over 30% of the recommended daily intake of vitamin K.**



The deep purple colour of blackberries is due to their high anthocyanin content, which not only gives them their antioxidant properties but also contributes to their anti-inflammatory effects.



Blackberries have a relatively low glycemic index, meaning they have minimal impact on blood sugar levels when consumed in moderation, making them a suitable choice for individuals managing diabetes or looking to stabilise their blood sugar levels.

TYPES OF BERRIES AND THEIR STRESS-REDUCING BENEFITS

RASPBERRIES



Raspberries are a fantastic choice for stress relief due to their high levels of antioxidants, particularly vitamin C and quercetin, which can help combat the negative effects of stress on the body by reducing inflammation and oxidative stress.

Additionally, raspberries contain fibre, which can aid in digestion and promote a healthy gut, indirectly supporting stress management.

Did you know?



Raspberries are one of the richest sources of dietary fibre among fruits, with a high fibre content that supports digestive health and can help regulate blood sugar levels.



The vibrant red colour of raspberries comes from their anthocyanin content, a type of antioxidant that has been associated with various health benefits, including reduced inflammation and improved heart health.



Raspberries are relatively low in calories and carbohydrates, making them a great option for those following a balanced diet or watching their calorie intake.

TYPES OF BERRIES AND THEIR STRESS-REDUCING BENEFITS

CRANBERRIES



Cranberries offer several stress-relieving properties, primarily due to their high antioxidant content, particularly proanthocyanidins, which may help reduce inflammation and oxidative stress in the body.

Additionally, cranberries contain vitamin C, which supports immune function and may contribute to overall stress resilience.

Did you know?

-  Cranberries are native to North America and have been used by Indigenous peoples for centuries for their medicinal properties, particularly in the treatment of urinary tract infections.
-  Cranberries are one of the few fruits that grow in bogs or wetlands, requiring a unique combination of acidic soil, sand, and water to thrive.
-  Cranberries are harvested in the fall and are often associated with Thanksgiving and holiday meals, but they can be enjoyed year-round in various dishes, from sauces to baked goods to salads.



BERRIES – SUPERFOOD

- **Add Them to Breakfast:** Start your day with a boost of antioxidants by adding berries to your breakfast. You can sprinkle them over oatmeal, cereal, or yogurt for a delicious and nutritious start to your morning.
- **Blend Them into Smoothies:** Berries are perfect for adding natural sweetness and vibrant colour to smoothies. Blend them with leafy greens, banana, and your favourite milk or yogurt for a refreshing and nutrient-packed drink.
- **Snack on Fresh Berries:** Keep a bowl of fresh berries handy for a convenient and healthy snack option. Enjoy them on their own or pair them with nuts or cheese for a satisfying midday pick-me-up.
- **Incorporate Them into Salads:** Add a burst of flavour and nutrition to your salads by tossing in some berries. Their sweet and tangy taste pairs well with leafy greens, nuts, seeds, and a light vinaigrette dressing.
- **Freeze Them for Later:** Extend the shelf life of your berries by freezing them as they don't lose their nutrients when frozen.

BERRIES – SUPERFOOD

BENEFITS

- Berries are rich in antioxidants, which help fight oxidative stress and inflammation in the body, potentially reducing the risk of chronic diseases like heart disease and cancer.
- They are low in calories and high in fibre, making them a great option for weight management and digestive health.

RECOMMENDED SERVINGS

- The American Heart Association recommends consuming at least 1.5 to 2 cups of berries per day as part of a balanced diet.
- Aim for a variety of berries throughout the week to maximize the nutritional benefits.

FACTS

- A study published in the Journal of Nutrition found that regular consumption of berries was associated with improved cognitive function and delayed cognitive ageing in older adults.
- Research has shown that the antioxidants in berries, such as flavonoids and anthocyanins, may help improve insulin sensitivity and reduce the risk of type 2 diabetes.

CHAPTER 6 WHOLEGRAINS STRESS-BUSTING POWERHOUSES



by Lina Cook

WHOLE GRAINS – STRESS-BUSTING POWERHOUSES

stabilising mood swings

Whole grains are rich in complex carbohydrates, which play a crucial role in stabilising blood sugar levels and serotonin production.

Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that helps regulate mood, sleep, and appetite, making it essential for managing stress and promoting feelings of calm and relaxation.



WHOLE GRAINS – STRESS-BUSTING POWERHOUSES

WHOLE GRAINS

Whole grains are packed with essential nutrients, including fibre, vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants.

Fibre helps promote digestive health and keeps you feeling full and satisfied, while vitamins and minerals support overall health and immunity.

 Some of the main and healthiest whole grains known for promoting stress relief and calming the nervous system are:

-  • Quinoa
-  • Oats
-  • Brown Rice
-  • Barley Buckwheat
-  • Amaranth

Chapter 6/Whole Grains - Stress-Busting Powerhouses

✓ **Quinoa:** Rich in protein, fibre, and essential nutrients like magnesium, quinoa can help regulate blood sugar levels and promote relaxation.



✓ **OATS:** Oats are a great source of soluble fibre and contain beta-glucan, which has been shown to reduce cortisol levels and improve mood.



✓ **Brown Rice:** High in complex carbohydrates and B vitamins, brown rice provides steady energy and supports serotonin production, helping to stabilise mood.



✓ **Barleys:** Barley contains high levels of soluble fibre and selenium, which can help reduce inflammation and support overall well-being.

✓ **Amaranth:** Packed with protein, fibre, and micronutrients like calcium and iron, amaranth can help support energy levels and reduce feelings of fatigue and stress.





WHOLE GRAINS

- **Choose Whole Grain Options:** Opt for whole grain varieties of bread, pasta, rice, and cereal instead of refined grains. Whole grains contain more fibre, vitamins, and minerals, which can help regulate mood and reduce stress.
- **Start Your Day with Whole Grains:** Enjoy oatmeal or whole grain cereal for breakfast to provide steady energy throughout the morning. The complex carbohydrates in whole grains can help stabilize blood sugar levels and promote a sense of calm.
- **Mix Whole Grains into Meals:** Add cooked quinoa, brown rice, or barley to soups, salads, and stir-fries for added texture, flavor, and nutritional benefits. Whole grains can help you feel fuller for longer, reducing cravings and promoting relaxation.
- **Snack on Whole Grain Options:** Choose whole grain crackers, popcorn, or air-popped whole grain chips for satisfying snacks. Whole grains can provide a steady supply of energy, helping to prevent energy crashes and mood swings.
- **Try incorporating a variety of whole grains** into your meals, such as farro, bulgur, millet, and wild rice.

WHOLE GRAINS

BENEFITS

- Whole grains contain complex carbohydrates, which are broken down slowly in the body, providing a steady supply of energy and promoting feelings of calm and relaxation.
- Whole grains are rich in fibre, which supports digestive health and can help reduce stress by regulating blood sugar levels and promoting satiety.

RECOMMENDED SERVINGS

- The Dietary Guidelines recommend consuming at least half of your grains as whole grains. Aim for 3 to 5 servings of whole grains per day, which can include foods like whole grain bread, pasta, rice, and cereal.

FACTS

- Research published in the Journal of Nutrients indicates that a significant portion of the population in Western countries fails to meet the recommended intake of whole grains. In the United States, for example, data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) show that only about 8% of adults consume the recommended three servings of whole grains per day.



WHOLE GRAIN RECIPES

15-min ideas and recipes to help
you reap the stress-relieving
benefits of whole grains

Lina Cook

@DRAWASTARTODAY





WHOLE GRAIN WRAP WITH HUMMUS AND VEGGIES



Ingredients:

- Whole grain wraps or tortillas
- Hummus
- Mixed salad greens
- Sliced cucumber
- Shredded carrots
- Sliced bell peppers

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.

How to make:

1. Spread a generous layer of hummus onto each whole grain wrap or tortilla.
2. Top with mixed salad greens, sliced cucumber, shredded carrots, and sliced bell peppers.
3. Roll up tightly, slice in half if desired, and serve immediately.
4. Enjoy with the whole family.
Kids will absolutely love these!



BROWN NOODLES STIR-FRY WITH TOFU AND VEGETABLES:



Ingredients:

- 2 cups cooked whole wheat noodles (3-4 mins) or brown rice (20-35mins, less if it's been soaked first))
- Mixed vegetables (such as bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, and snap peas)
- Tofu or cooked chicken breast, sliced
- Soy sauce
- Garlic, minced
- Sesame oil

How to make:

1. In a large skillet or wok, heat sesame oil over medium heat.
2. Add minced garlic and stir-fry for 1 minute.
3. Add mixed vegetables and tofu or chicken, and cook until vegetables are tender-crisp (5-7 mins).
4. Boil noodles for about 3-4 minutes separately.
5. Stir in cooked noodles or rice and soy sauce, and toss until well combined.
6. Cook for an additional 2-3 minutes, then serve hot.

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.



AVOCADO TOAST WITH WHOLE GRAIN BREAD

Ingredients:

- 2 slices whole grain bread, toasted
- 1 ripe avocado
- 1 small tomato, sliced
- Handful of arugula
- Salt and pepper to taste

***Option:** pomegranate seeds or paprika work wonders for taste. I sometimes topped mine with crumbled feta cheese.

How to make:

1. Mash the avocado in a small bowl and season with salt and pepper.
2. Spread the mashed avocado evenly onto the toasted whole grain bread slices.
3. Top each slice with tomato slices and arugula.
4. Serve immediately. As easy and as nutritious as that.

Note: Enjoyed best when shared.

HOW TO BUILD A BALANCED MEAL

Building a balanced meal to relieve symptoms of stress and anxiety involves incorporating nutrient-rich foods that support overall well-being and promote a sense of calm.

Here's a guide to help you create a stress-relieving meal plan by mixing and matching from the food groups below.

LEAN PROTEINS

- turkey
- chicken
- salmon
- tuna
- white fish
- lentils
- chickpeas
- tofu
- seitan
- vegan protein

COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

- brown rice
- quinoa
- whole-grain pasta
- barley
- sweat potatoes
- oats or buckwheat
- whole-wheat toast
- whole-grain tortilla

HEALTHY FATS

- avocado
- eggs
- salmon
- olive oil
- coconut oil
- sesame oil
- almond milk
- goat’s cheese
- dark chocolate
- nuts, seeds
- nut butter (peanut, almond, walnut, etc)

FRUIT / VEGGIES

- banana
- berries
- apple
- pineapple
- orange
- broccoli
- asparagus
- brussel sprouts
- green beans
- cabbage
- spinach
- mushrooms
- onion
- beans
- arugula
- carrots
- cucumber
- celery
- leafy greens
- bell pepper

MADE FOR YOU WEEKLY SHOPPING LIST

INCL. MY FAVOURITE RECIPES DISCUSSED

@DRAWASTARTODAY



WEEKLY SHOPPING LIST

FOR A FAMILY OF 4 (FOR DE-STRESS)

MONDAY 	• Whole grain pasta (2 packets) • Spinach (2 bunches) • Salmon fillets (4 portions) • Almonds (1 packet)
TUESDAY 	• Quinoa (1 packet) • Kale (2 bunches) • Walnuts (1 packet) • Chicken breasts (4 portions)
WEDNESDAY 	• Brown rice (1 packet) • Swiss chard (2 bunches) • Flaxseeds (1 packet) • Tuna steaks (4 portions)
THURSDAY 	• Whole grain bread (2 loaves) • Arugula (2 bunches) • Pumpkin seeds (1 packet) • Turkey breast (1 packet)
FRIDAY 	• Whole grain bread (2 loaves) • Arugula (2 bunches) • Pumpkin seeds (1 packet) • Turkey breast (1 packet)
SATURDAY 	• Oats (1 packet) • Collard greens (2 bunches) • Chia seeds (1 packet) • Trout fillets (4 portions)
SUNDAY 	• Whole wheat tortillas (1 packet) • Beet greens (2 bunches) • Sesame seeds (1 packet) • Sardines (4 tins)

TIPS

ACTION PLAN

Note that changing your diet is 80% of the way. To walk the extra 20%, you would need to incorporate some new habits in your daily routine. Here's some good examples.

- **Aim for balanced meals that** include a combination of protein, carbohydrates, and healthy fats to keep blood sugar levels stable and promote sustained energy.
- **Practice mindful** eating by savouring each bite, chewing slowly, and paying attention to hunger and fullness cues.
- **Consider incorporating stress-busting herbs and spices** like turmeric, ginger, and garlic into your meals for added flavour and health benefits.
- **Drink plenty of water** throughout the day to stay hydrated. Dehydration can exacerbate symptoms of stress and anxiety, so aim to drink at least 8 glasses of water daily. Herbal teas or infused water can also be hydrating and soothing.

By prioritising nutrient-dense foods and adopting mindful eating habits, you can create meals that support your body's natural ability to cope with stress and promote overall well-being.



ACTION PLAN

And more..

- **Prioritise Sleep:** Quality sleep is crucial for managing stress and promoting overall well-being. Aim for 7-9 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night to allow your body and mind to rest and recharge.
- **Incorporate Stress-Relieving Activities:** Practice regular physical activity into your routine can help reduce stress levels and improve mood. Find activities you enjoy, whether it's yoga, walking, or dancing, and make time for them regularly. Practice mindfulness and relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, meditation, or progressive muscle relaxation to help calm your mind and body. These practices can help you stay present and better manage stress when it arises.
- **Cultivate Supportive Relationships:** Surround yourself with supportive friends, family members, or peers who can offer encouragement, empathy, and practical assistance during challenging times.
- **Make time for social connections and meaningful interactions,** whether it's through in-person gatherings, phone calls, or video chats. Sharing experiences and emotions with others can help alleviate feelings of isolation and provide a sense of belonging.

30+ MUST-HAVE FOODS FOR COPING WITH STRESS

A message from the author: In closing, remember that the journey to destress and reclaim your well-being begins with what you put on your plate. By incorporating the 30+ powerhouse foods outlined in this book into your daily meals, you're not just nourishing your body; you're arming yourself with the resilience to conquer life's challenges with ease. Embrace the power of food as your ally in the fight against stress, and take the first step towards a happier, healthier you today. Let's embark on this transformative journey together—your body and mind deserve nothing less. Take action now and make every meal a step towards a stress-free life!

Lina Cook

