

# Stress, Anxiety and the Wholefood Diet



Around the globe, there is a growing epidemic of mood disorders with anxiety at the core. Anxiety is a broad term used to describe a range of symptoms that varies for different individuals. Commonly experienced symptoms include excessive worry, trouble relaxing, irritability, problematic sleep, difficulty concentrating as well as the resultant muscular tension and hardness. Extreme cases of anxiety can lead to more serious symptoms such as fear, panic attacks, obsessive compulsiveness and phobias.

Choosing a diet that consists primarily of fresh wholefoods, can play an important role in supporting the treatment and recovery from anxiety, as well as supporting our overall health and wellbeing.

Our bodies evolved thousands of years ago, in a world of whole foods, free from refined carbohydrates, sugars and processed foods. Today, our bodies are often pushed beyond their limits to deal with unnatural additives and preservatives, highly processed fats and oils as well as excessive consumption of alcohol, sugar and caffeine. These foods are taking their toll on our bodies and the state of our mental health.

Having to process much more than it was designed to, the body must produce higher levels of cortisol and adrenalin than what is an ideal. In a nutshell, it is the circulation of these hormones in excess in the body that leads to much disharmony and imbalance including anxiety as well as significant damage to our organs.

When we keep to a simple wholefoods diet, our body has more energy to spend maintaining and repairing the cells and connective tissues in and around the brain, muscles, immune system, digestive tract and heart. We also are able to absorb more nutrients from our food, better eliminate toxins, and produce the happy neurotransmitters in our brain more efficiently.

It makes sense that a balanced diet of wholefoods that includes fresh fruits and vegetables and a mixture of legumes, grains, nuts and seeds will contribute to more energy, a more relaxed nervous system and a settled mind.

If you suffer from anxiety symptoms, try switching caffeinated tea and coffee for non caffeinated teas such as fresh peppermint leaf, rooibos or dandelion root tea. Choose whole grains and seeds such as quinoa and buckwheat instead of pasta and breads and keep sugary foods for the occasional treat.

Enjoy your week in the kitchen,

Jesabe Warner

Naturopath, Affordable Wholefoods

**[Read more here about the link between Sugar and Anxiety](#)**