

STRESS LESS WITH THE **Anti-Anxiety Diet**

The old saying “you are what you eat” might be truer than we ever realized. Food directly affects your brain—and your mood. Are you giving your mind that top-of-the-line premium fuel, or is it simply running on fumes?

Foods to Fight Anxiety

If you struggle with anxiety, a diet rich in the right foods can help. Some research shows that these ingredients may have a positive effect on reducing anxiety.

☐ **ANTIOXIDANTS:**
beans, berries, turmeric, ginger



☐ **MAGNESIUM:**
leafy dark greens, whole grains, nuts, seeds

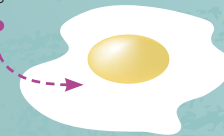
☐ **OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS:**
salmon, walnuts, chia seeds, flaxseeds



☐ **PROBIOTICS:**
yogurt, pickles, sauerkraut, kefir



☐ **ZINC:**
legumes, beef, cashews, egg yolks



Best Practices for Beverages

1. Stay hydrated with plenty of water.
2. Reduce or eliminate your alcohol intake.
3. Cut back on caffeine.

Food for Thought

You may need to adjust more than your diet to deal with anxiety. If your symptoms feel severe or last for more than two weeks, talk with your healthcare provider.

www.bfm.bm

BF&M Overseas Healthcare Toll-Free Helpline

BF&M medical assistance is available 24/7 with our toll-free numbers:

- 1-888-674-1367 (from Bermuda)
- 1-877-236-2338 (from outside Bermuda)
- 1-519-251-5186 (from Bermuda: collect calls)
- 1-519-251-5185 (from outside Bermuda: collect calls)

See back issues of *healthmatters* online at www.bfm.bm/news/healthmatters.

BF&M wants you to LiveWell!

Check out the LiveWell Program at www.bfm.bm/products/group/group-health.aspx#LiveWell.

Meet us on Facebook for hot news, policy info, and events.

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NEED MENTAL HEALTH HELP? Call the 24-hour Mental Health Crisis Line at 1-441-239-1111.



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Healthy Foods to Help with Allergies



If you have seasonal allergies, you're probably familiar with the sneezing, runny nose, itchy throat, and other symptoms that pop up when plants are in bloom. Luckily, the following foods may help you feel a bit better:

- **Apples**, especially their peels, contain quercetin. This flavonoid compound helps prevent your body from pumping out histamines. Histamines are molecules in the body that trigger the immune system, causing congestion, itching, and other irritating allergy symptoms. You can also get quercetin from onions, broccoli, and grapes.
- **Fish**, such as salmon and trout, are high in omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids may help fend off

symptoms, such as narrowing of airways, that can occur with asthma and some seasonal allergies.

- **Yogurt and kefir** contain probiotics—healthy bacteria—that can alter the way your immune system responds to allergens. Some studies show probiotics may also help reduce itching and congestion.
- **Honey** may also act as an antihistamine and reduce inflammation. So, it may help ease seasonal allergies. Plus, some theorize that because honey contains pollen, it might build up your tolerance to this allergen and relieve pollen allergies. However, studies have produced mixed results on honey's effectiveness.

More Resilience, Better Health?

Resilience doesn't erase pain and suffering. But it can boost your ability to handle life's challenges—and research shows that resilient people tend to be healthier.

To improve resilience:

- **Start small.** Break problems into smaller steps so you can move step-by-step toward a solution.
- **Focus on past positives.** Next time you encounter a hardship, recall a past triumph. Remind yourself how you overcame and emerged stronger.
- **Be kind to yourself.** Instead of judging or blaming yourself for problems, think

of how you would treat a friend in your situation. Practice self-care, such as stress management, getting enough rest, and exercising regularly.

- **Reach out.** Part of resilience is knowing when and how to seek support from others when you need it.



health facts

Don't Forget Sunscreen Basics

There's nothing like getting outdoors to brighten your mood. But remember to protect your skin from the sun's rays with sunscreen! Wear it every day—even when it's overcast.

Follow these tips as you shop for sunscreen:

- Opt for a cream on the face and anywhere you may have dry skin.
- Use sticks beneath the eyes and on your ears and nose.
- To cover an area with hair, pick a gel.
- For spots that are difficult to reach, use a spray.

No matter what kind of sunscreen you choose, it should be water-resistant, offer broad-spectrum protection, and have an SPF of at least 30. SPF indicates how much the sunscreen shields you from the sun. The higher the SPF, the more protection you get.

Don't forget to reapply sunscreen throughout the day, especially if you'll be swimming or sweating. Check the label for guidance. And don't be shy about lathering it on—most adults need a full ounce to cover their bodies.

Taking the steps to protect your skin from the sun is more than worth it. It not only helps you fend off signs of aging, but also lowers your risk for skin cancer.



CHECK IT OUT.

Have an annual skin cancer screening with a dermatologist.

FAQ: COVID-19 Vaccines

Why do I need a COVID-19 vaccine?

Vaccination protects you against a disease that can have serious or life-threatening complications. And if you're less likely to get COVID-19, you're less likely to spread it.

Will I need more than one dose?

The Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine is designed to be given in two injections 21 days apart.

How does the vaccine work?

The Pfizer vaccine is made with messenger RNA (mRNA), which teaches your cells to make a piece of protein found only in the virus that causes COVID-19. Your immune system recognizes the protein shouldn't be there and builds immune cells to defend against it. If you run into COVID-19 in the future, your immune cells will be ready to fight the virus.

Is the vaccine safe?

The Pfizer vaccine has been approved for use in the U.K. after meeting strict standards from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency. It was also approved in the United States by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Are there side effects?

The most common symptoms are tiredness, chills, headache, muscle pain, and soreness

at the injection site. Some people run a fever. These symptoms generally start within a few days after getting the vaccine and last one to three days. It's not a sign that you're sick; it means the vaccine is working.

If I'm careful, why do I need to get vaccinated?

Masks and social distancing reduce your risk of exposure to COVID-19, but in case you are exposed, vaccination gets your body ready to fend off the virus so that you don't become sick.



STAY UP-TO-DATE.

For the latest info, call the COVID-19 Vaccine Hotline at **444-2498** and select option #2, or email **vaccine@gov.bm**.



The Pandemic's Toll on Teeth

Clenched teeth have long served as a telltale sign of stress. And as the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic continue to weigh on people, dentists are noticing a concerning trend: more patients grinding their teeth.

Bruxism—the medical term for teeth grinding—sometimes causes no symptoms. In other cases, you may develop:

- Chipped, cracked, loose, or painful teeth
- Worn-down enamel, the substance covering teeth
- Headaches or earaches
- Jaw or facial pain

With so many other pandemic-related concerns, your oral health may have fallen by the wayside. But addressing grinding now can prevent more serious problems later.

Besides damaged teeth, these include a jaw condition called temporomandibular joint disorder (TMJ). Signs of TMJ include jaw pain, stiffness, and clicking.

If you have tooth pain or discomfort, make an appointment with your dentist right away. Treatment for bruxism often starts with a mouth guard worn at night to reduce grinding or prevent damage.

A wellness programme tailored for you

If your health insurance is with BF&M, you have access to LiveWell, our free online wellness platform that can be tailored to your needs and interests.

Our easy-to-use online wellness platform includes:

- An individualised Wellbeing Activity Hub
- Fun and engaging wellness challenges
- A personal Wellness Assessment
- Healthy habits programmes
- Access to health lifestyle and chronic disease management programmes and events
- Access to BF&M's LiveWell Rewards Programme



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LiveWell is intended to complement rather than substitute for proper medical advice or treatment.

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