

Managing Your Stress with Healthy Eating



Eat Balanced Meals

Include lean protein with each meal, like poultry, egg whites, low-fat dairy, fish, or beans. Protein satisfies hunger and helps keep you mentally alert. Round out meals with fresh fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

Cut Back on Caffeine and Alcohol

People often turn to caffeine as a pick me up, but it can disrupt your night's sleep. So can alcohol consumption before bed, which reduces rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. Disruptions in REM sleep may cause daytime drowsiness and poor concentration.



Eat Regularly and Don't Skip Meals

When you're stressed, it's easy to put meals off or even skip them altogether. But energy levels will suffer as a result. And you might end up overeating when you do finally eat. If stress is an appetite-killer, try eating smaller amounts of food more often during the day. Prepare ahead of time and portion out meals and snacks.

Practice Mindful Eating

If you're eating at a desk while you work, or paying bills while you eat dinner, something's got to give. Take a little extra time to slow down and relax while you eat. That way, you're likely to eat less and enjoy it more.



Stress is any change in the environment that requires your body to react and adjust in response. The body reacts to these changes with **physical, mental, and emotional responses**.

The body's natural response to stress leads us to feel alert. We evolved this **'fight or flight response'** to defend ourselves against a sudden danger or threat. Cortisol, a hormone produced when we're

stressed, does a lot of good things. It sharpens your cognition, so you **think faster**. It slows down your digestion and immune system.

The problem is if Cortisol stays high in your blood stream for long periods of time, all those things that got shut down short term stay shut down. For example, it can tax the body's immune system, making it **more difficult for us to ward off disease**.

Sources:

<https://discovergoodnutrition.com/2011/03/5-healthy-eating-tips-to-reduce-stress/>
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