

# Stress and Nutrition

Stress comes in many forms and many ways, but their effects are still the same on our bodies. Anxiety, overwork, inadequate sleep or diet prompt loss of appetite, poor nutrient absorption, diarrhea and dehydration. All these stress factors act as "nutrition robbers" by demanding increased nutritional requirements, especially in the form of vitamins.

How one copes with this initial "sneak attack" can create additional nutritional deficiencies:

**Smoking:** Smoking can deplete our bodies of certain nutrients. For example, studies have shown that Vitamin C blood levels are significantly reduced in heavy smokers.

**Alcohol:** Alcohol may interfere with the body's ability to utilize Vitamins B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>6</sub>, and folic acid. The problem is complicated further because heavy drinkers usually do not eat food of good nutritional value.

**Processed Foods:** When times get tough, the simplest way to grab a quick meal may not be the best. Processed foods are often lacking in nutritional quality, their natural vitamin contents considerably reduced and also containing additives of questionable safety.

What can you do? Be aware of your stress level and your reactions to it. Learn a variety of stress management techniques to cope with different types of stress you are subjected to and develop some creative approaches to nutrition that will suit your individual needs.

Peer health advisors and the Health Education Center can help you with these skills and to keep yourself from being nutritionally robbed.

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At this point in the quarter, most of us feel like all we really want to do is head for Mexico for 3 months. Midterms are over, thank goodness, but finals are just around the corner.

Stress can take its toll on us, both mentally and physically. It's easy to get run down, catch the bug that's been going around and end up in bed.

However, one of the best precautions you can take to prevent illness and exhaustion is to eat a satisfying and balanced diet.

Winter's a good time to indulge yourself in thick, hot soups, homebaked breads, or nutritious snacks. We do tend to need a few more calories in the winter, so allow yourself an extra serving or nibble.

Breakfast is considered by far the most important meal of the day by nutritionists, but we all know it's the easiest to skip. The recipe below may help you start the day out with a novel but nutritious meal that's easier to face early in the morning than eggs and toast and much quicker to grab when you're late to class and need to run!

## DATE CASHEW COOKIES

2 cups pitted chopped dates or date pieces	
1 1/2 c. orange juice	1 t. cinnamon
3 T. oil	1 1/2 c. flour
3 T. melted butter or marg.	1 t. baking soda
2 T. vanilla	1/2 c. wheat germ
2 eggs	1 c. oat flakes
1/2 t. salt (optional)	1 c. chopped cashews or walnuts
finely grated orange peel	
(1 orange)	

Preheat oven to 350°. Place dates in blender with orange juice, oil, butter, vanilla, eggs, salt and cinnamon. Blend until dates are fairly well chopped: a few big pieces are fine.

In a bowl stir together flour, soda, wheat germ, oats, cashews, and orange peel. Combine with date mixture and drop by spoonfuls onto cookie sheets. Bake for 12 - 15 minutes. Makes 3 to 4 doz.

Enjoy.

Kate Schuyler  
Nutrition Peer Health Advisor

## A STRESS FREE RECIPE

- 1 handful of friends
- A squeeze of humor
- A few drops of silence
- An armload of hugs
- 1 Tablespoon of smiles
- 2 Cups of deep breathing
- A pinch of a nap
- A shake of laughter
- A smattering of kisses.

Mix well. Serve anytime.

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