

The Monthly Newsletter of the Plymouth Place Dining Services, Life Enrichment & Wellness Departments

Nutrition News You Can Use Lifestyle and Managing Stress



Do you have a go-to comfort food when you feel stressed? If so, you are not alone. During times of stress, many of us may reach for foods or snacks and often these are high in saturated fats or added sugars. The fact that stress can impact food choices is not news. However, there might be more to the relationship between food and stress than you know about.

Our Body's Fight or Flight Response

Your central nervous system releases stress hormones such as adrenaline and cortisol when you feel anxious or stressed. These hormones trigger the fight or flight response, which gets your body ready for action. For example, your heart can beat more rapidly, your blood pressure may rise and your rate of breathing might increase. Being in a chronic state of stress can cause long term health problems. In addition to feeling anxious, some people may become depressed, struggle to get a good night's sleep or experience digestive issues.

Can Certain Nutrients Ease Stress?

Research linking certain nutrients to stress management is limited. Recent studies have focused on nutrients the brain needs to function normally. This can include nutrients like antioxidants or B vitamins. While some studies have looked at how supplements may help manage stress, results haven't been definitive. As these nutrients are already important in a healthy eating pattern, the best way to get them is through the foods you eat. For example, fruits

and vegetables contain antioxidants along with other nutrients that may work together to promote health. Many foods provide a variety of B vitamins naturally. This includes: whole grains, fruits, vegetables, dairy products, beans and meats.

Some studies also report a potential link between low levels of vitamin D and stress. These studies haven't proven if stress levels increase or decrease in response to vitamin D intake. However, your body does need it to function normally. Foods that contain vitamin D include fatty fish, eggs, fortified dairy and soy products and some mushrooms that are exposed to UV light.

Do Vitamin and Mineral Supplements Combat Stress?

Some supplements claim to help manage stress. However, the evidence supporting these supplements is limited and much more research is needed. Talk with your health care provider before taking any vitamin and mineral supplements.

Stress-Busters

When it comes to food and stress, one of the best things you can do for your body is to choose a balanced, healthy eating style. Participating in regular physical activity is also beneficial for managing stress. As little as five minutes of exercise a day can be beneficial. A **Registered Dietitian Nutritionist** can help you establish an individualized healthy eating plan that includes specific food preferences and goals for physical activity.

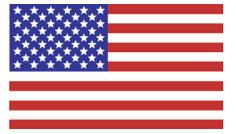
Other ways to help ease stress might include:

- *Relaxation activities, such as meditation, guided imagery or breathing exercises.*
- *Socializing with friends and loved ones for emotional support during stressful situations.*
- *Limiting excess caffeine.*
- *Consider seeking professional help. Stress can become debilitating. Counselors and other health care providers can offer treatments to help combat stress. **PP***

*Contributors: Barbara Gordon, RDN, LD and Sarah Klemm, RDN, CD, LDN
Published April 11, 2022
Reviewed March 2022*



We want your feedback... send your comments, suggestions and ideas to Karrah at KCullers@plymouthplace.org.



April 2022

Wellness Trend

Wellness Month –

Did you know May is Wellness Month? Each week there will be an event that is focusing on wellness in addition to the programs already offered. Stay tuned to the calendar, elevator signs and 1901 to find out what is going on!

Health and Wellness Fair –

Wednesday May 18th from 10am-12pm, Plymouth Place will be hosting a Health and Wellness Fair. Come join us to hear more about Nutrition, Therapy, Home Health, Wellness and many more. There will be a certified dance instructor hosting a live class as well as demonstrations from different departments throughout the building. Stay tuned for more information!

Health Education –

Join Ed on Friday May 13th at 2:30pm to learn about the importance exercise has on our Emotional wellness and well-being. If you have any questions, please call Ed or Stefanie at 708.482.6775. **PP**

Ladies Lunch

10:30 am on May 4th

Topic: Julia Child

CINCO DE MAYO IN THE PUB.

**Join us for Steak Tacos,
Margaritas, Chips & Salsa
and Live Music.**

Happy Mothers Day!

Join us on May 8th for brunch in Dole Hall, buffet style. Reservations should be made with the Call Center at 708.588.6423.

*The Vegetarian Dinner and
Step Up to the Plate have merged!
Join us in the Bistro on May 16 for a special
meal and talk about reducing hypertension.*

THE
BISTRO

AT PLYMOUTH PLACE

5:00 – 6:00 pm

Topic: Reducing Hypertension

Grow Little Seedlings

(To the tune of Glow Little Glow Worm)

**“ Grow Little Seedlings
Grow and mature;
With a bit of help from man
And a lot from Nature;
Grow little seedlings grow and grow ”**

There's plenty of evidence to show that all the great agrarian-based societies, even thousands of years ago; were successful because they were able to predict the changing seasons. Stonehenge was first and foremost a calendar. Its basic function was to predict the Vernal Equinox, the date that Spring arrived. The calendar at Stonehenge was so accurate that it showed that the length of a year was 365 & 1/4 days, a feat not achieved by the modern "European World" until the pronouncement of the Gregorian Calendar by Pope Gregory in 1582. Prior to the introduction of this calendar, Europe was 10 days out of alignment with nature.

Calendars and the observatories that made them possible have been found, not just in Stonehenge, but also Machu Pichu in Peru, Chichen Itza in the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico and the Cahokia Mounds in southern Illinois. The calendar is harder to discern as all were made of wood. However, finding some evidence of implanted upright tree trunks; archaeologists were able to predict where other trunks should have been placed. Sure enough, evidence of long rotted tree trunks were found in the predicted places. This indicated to the anthropologists that Cahokia did indeed have the knowledge to establish an observatory for predicting the optimum time to plant their seeds.

Many anthropologists have noted that another "primitive" holiday occurs soon after the Vernal Equinox. May Day is linked to many a legend of fertility rites. My own opinion is that these agrarian societies were far less concerned with human fertility. Baby making can be done year long. If we look at the rest of nature we see that cubs, bunnies, fawns, hatchlings, lambs and so on are best born in the spring or fall. The cold dark winter months are far more conducive for human mating than the months of May and June.

The earliest known May celebrations appeared with the Floralia, festival of Flora; the Roman goddess of flowers. As time went on in true Roman spirit this feast day was the basis for a month-long debauch. This continued to grow until Constantine (the first Christian ruler of the Roman Empire) put a sudden stop to it. With the coming of Christianity, Holy feast days were introduced to supplant the pagan festivals. **PP**

R. Gutekunst