STRENGTHEN AGAINST STRESS
TIPS FROM OUR CAMPUS REGISTERED DIETITIAN TO HELP YOU FEEL GOOD DURING FINALS WEEK

5 NUTRIENTS THAT WILL NOURISH YOUR NOGGIN

You need a wide variety of nutrient-rich foods to keep you feeling focused, balanced and aid in beating back stress. Here are our top five nutrients to incorporate daily and the best foods to find them in!

**OMEGA-3 FATTY ACIDS**
Found in salmon, anchovies, walnuts and chia, omega-3 fatty acids are a no-brainer (pun intended) when it comes to fighting stress and anxiety while promoting brain and heart health.

**B VITAMINS**
The members of the vitamin B complex family (including thiamine, riboflavin and biotin) are essential for keeping energy high while easing stress and improving memory. Find Bs in dark green veggies, eggs, quinoa, animal-based protein and whole grains.

**MAGNESIUM**
Sometimes referred to as the original “chill pill,” magnesium helps fight anxiety and depression by producing and supporting serotonin, a neurotransmitter that helps maintain mood balance. Get magnesium naturally in snacks like nuts, seeds, yogurt, bananas, dried fruit and dark (60% or higher) chocolate. Boost your intake at meals by including dark, leafy greens, fish, whole grains, beans, and avocados.

**ZINC**
Low zinc levels are linked to irritability, depression and decreased immunity, so upping your zinc bolsters your body and mind against stress. Find it in seafood (especially oysters), meat and poultry, spinach, beans, cashews, pumpkin seeds, chickpeas and whole grains. It becomes more difficult to absorb zinc with age, making these sources important regular dietary staples.

**VITAMIN C**
Vitamin C helps to lower cortisol levels, reduce blood pressure, and plays a role in producing serotonin. Citrus fruits, bell peppers, sweet potato, cruciferous (broccoli, cauliflower, kale, cabbage) and green leafy veggies are all good sources of Vitamin C.

COMFORT FOODS VS. WHAT TRULY COMFORTS

While a big ol’ bowl of ice cream may seem like exactly what you need when feeling stressed, it is actually quite the opposite. The excess sugar, saturated fat, trans fat and simple, processed carbohydrates found in most comfort foods can have some not-so-soothing effects on your body. Too much is not only linked to unwanted weight gain and increased risk for chronic conditions like diabetes and heart disease, but can also lead to more immediate effects like feeling sluggish or blue and heightened anxiety.

It’s far better to reach for food that is loaded with real comfort such as those mentioned for a healthy dose of omega-3s, magnesium, and vitamin c!

Still have questions? E-mail campus dietitian Amanda Reichardt at amanda.reichardt@stonybrook.edu.
TRY THIS TO RELIEVE STRESS RIGHT NOW!

**Just breathe.** There are major benefits to bringing your attention to your breath. The rhythm and depth of your breath directly affects your state of mind and overall health. Try this technique from the Center for Mind-Body Medicine: Close your eyes. Breathe deeply in through the nose and out through the mouth, saying to yourself "soft" as you breathe in and "belly" as you breathe out. Continue for five minutes. A good thing about breathing: you can do it anywhere, anytime and it’s free!

**MORE SOLUTIONS TO HELP KEEP STRESS AT BAY DURING FINALS:**

1. **Exercise** produces endorphins, linked to feelings of euphoria. Movement also distracts from stress and balances the negative effects stress has on your immune system.

2. **Massage** induces chemical changes that reduce pain and stress in the body. Studies show that cortisol levels drop after massage.

3. **Meditation** allows you to refocus and eliminate the stream of jumbled thoughts that can crowd your mind and cause stress.

4. **Yoga** helps relax the body by releasing muscle tension, flushing the body and brain with fresh blood and oxygen, and increasing feelings of well-being.

5. **Laughing** tricks your nervous system into making you happy. Giggle lots to release endorphins and decrease levels of cortisol and adrenaline. Hey, how does the ocean say hello? It waves!

6. **Aromatherapy** signals the brain’s olfactory system, causing a release of chemicals that calm and relax. Try sniffing rosemary or lavender.

7. **Unplug.** We are more connected than ever and it is actually increasing stress and anxiety. Try scheduling regular "do not disturb" times on your phone and step away from the computer.

8. **Music** can lower blood pressure and reduce cortisol levels. In addition to your favorite mood-boosting tunes, listen to ocean or nature sounds to relieve stress and transport you.

9. **Take a break.** If none of the above speak to your soul, find what makes your heart sing and be sure to take some time to do it. Taking time to do what makes you happy (paint, fish, write, etc.) may be just what you need. Steps away from studying and do what feels good.

10. **Nourish.** Visit East and West Side Dining throughout Finals Week and find a slew of stress-fighting nutrients. These foods will be identified on our menus for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Also, take a late night study break to enjoy our Strengthen Against Stress food bars at Dine-In December 12-17 (see schedule to the right). No time to catch a break? Grab some Strengthen Against Stress snacks from Emporium and tote them around with you all week long.

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**LATE NIGHT STRENGTHEN AGAINST STRESS FOOD BARS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>EAST SIDE DINE-IN</th>
<th>WEST SIDE DINE-IN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TUES DEC 12</strong></td>
<td>Chia Pudding Bar</td>
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<td>omega-3 fatty acids</td>
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<td><strong>WED DEC 13</strong></td>
<td>Hummus Bar zinc</td>
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<td><strong>THURS DEC 14</strong></td>
<td>Dark Chocolate S’mores Bar magnesium</td>
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<td><strong>FRI DEC 15</strong></td>
<td>Quinoa Cereal Bar B vitamins</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SAT DEC 16</strong></td>
<td>Whole Grain Pancake Bar B vitamins</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SUN DEC 17</strong></td>
<td>Baked Sweet Potato Bar vitamin C</td>
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**SBU EATS**

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