



ANXIETY:

A Nutritional and Herbal Regimen to Reduce Anxiety and Promote Emotional Well-Being

By

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Before you diagnose yourself with anxiety, be sure to have a complete medical exam to determine that your anxiety condition is not caused by a medical illness.

Many cases of mild anxiety and excessive stress can be managed by nutritional and herbal remedies. Here is how:

Caution: These remedies are not recommended for children under the age of eighteen. Do not use any natural alternatives if you suffer from kidney disease, heart disease, are pregnant, think you might become pregnant, or are planning on becoming pregnant or breast feeding without medical approval and oversight. Always inform your primary medical provider of any nutritional and / herbal regimen you are using. For more complete information and / or medical oversight, consult a board-certified naturopath regarding this treatment program. If you are experiencing suicidal thinking, always seek medical help immediately.

Start with the basics

There are two types of anxiety. Clinical anxiety is a medical condition where a person experiences excessive anxiety throughout much of the time. Clinical anxiety can be mild, moderate, or severe. This condition is caused by a medical condition where there is a shortage of the chemicals needed in the body that promote good brain function so that the person can experience normal anxiety responses.

Situational anxiety is caused by unfortunate circumstances in which the person is anxious related directly to unfortunate circumstances which are happening or did happen. If a person is experiencing situational anxiety or mild continuous anxiety, then nutritional and herbal treatments may very well help immensely.

1. First, start with a well-balanced diet. Eat three to four balanced meals daily. It is crucial to eat at the same time each day so that your brain can learn to set its normal biorhythms. If you eat at erratic times each day or do not give your brain the nutrition it needs at regular-set times daily, your brain will not be able to stabilize itself and set its normal biorhythms.
2. In the same sense, sleep at the same time each day. The average amount of time needed for sleep is eight hours. This is set as the average, because some people can get by with 6 hours of sleep and others need 10 hours of sleep. If you can function well on 6 hours of sleep, this is fine. If you are one of the 20% of the human population that needs 10 hours of sleep per night, then allow yourself this amount of sleep. Go to bed at the same time each night and wake at the same time each day, every day. Your brain needs to set its normal biorhythms ... and without this, you will not be able to promote normal brain function.

If you do tend to an anxiety disorder, you will always need to keep a steady schedule. This is even more critical for you than people without anxiety disorders. You will probably have to pass up jobs that require you to work rotating shifts. You can, however, work any shift if it is a steady shift. You will just need to keep the same schedule of eating at the same time and sleeping at the same time, no matter what shift your work requires. I think it is important to note here, that after you establish your regular eating and sleeping schedule for a solid four months, if it takes you longer than one hour to fall asleep, you may have a sleep condition or you may be trying to set your biorhythms at a different time than is normal for you.

Generally speaking, humans fall into different biorhythm categories. The first group would naturally fall asleep at about 8 PM and sleep well until 4 am - 6 am (depending on sleep needs) The second group would naturally fall asleep at 10 PM and sleep well until 6 am - 8 am (depending on sleep needs). The third group would naturally fall asleep at 12 midnight and sleep well until 8 am - 10 am (depending on sleep needs) - The fourth group would naturally fall asleep at 2 am and sleep to 10 am - 12 noon (depending on sleep needs). All these biorhythms are within normal limits. It is important to discover which is your normal biorhythm schedule and try to keep it. If you keep within your normal biorhythm schedule, your brain will function better and your anxiety level will be better because this was how your system was created to work, however, life does not always give us this option. If you can find employment that lets you work as closely to your normal biorhythms, all the better - But you may not be able to do that. Then you need to treat yourself as well as you can but stay to the same daily schedule so as not to confuse your brain function and allow yourself the best mental outlook and physical wellness as possible.

1. Exercise daily - Do something that you can keep up daily, even if it is just to march in place for 20-30 minutes daily while watching your favorite TV program or streaming your favorite series. Some people like to put on uplifting music and dance around the house for 20-30 minutes. Your body needs its circulation flowing to feed your brain the blood flow it needs to keep you feeling better. Again, do this at the same time each day, so that your brain can depend on your help to keep it going. Please don't do this right before bed, as it will make it harder for your brain to relax if you do this...
2. Settle all arguments daily. Don't try to function day by day if you have something unresolved on your mind. Find a way to resolve any conflict or find a way to let go of conflict each day. Make sure conflict is not carried over from day to day as this will "fester" in your subconscious and create anxiety. Check yourself daily. Is there conflict I need to resolve? Is there someone I need to forgive? Alexander Pope is credited with saying, "To error is human; to forgive is divine". Perhaps, you will need to train your emotions to take the high road daily and at the end of the day, review your day, and chose to forgive anyone who has wronged you... Forgive, and give up anger at the end of each day. Your brain will thank you as it breathes a sigh of relief and no longer needs to carry unforgiveness along your daily walk.
3. Get enough fluids. If your brain does not have enough good, healthy water each day, it cannot conduct the daily chemical processes it needs well. So, love your brain and drink 6-10 ounces of pure water each day so that not only can your brain function better, but your body is healthier. One of the greatest contributors to fatigue, anxiety, and poor memory is dehydration. So, don't neglect this important aspect of mental well-being. **(See proper electrolyte hydration contained in this website for additional wellness)**

Now that you have the basics down and agree to care for your brain and wellness, there are natural alternatives that will greatly improve your anxiety and mental well-being.

1. You will need a good multi-vitamin / multi-mineral tablet with anti-oxidants. Take a tab of these vital nutrients daily or as directed on the bottle. You may need to get this at a health food store. Do not get a compound that contains Chromium Picolinate as picolinate is now known as a carcinogenic (cancer causing agent). You do need Chromium but choose a supplement where the chromium is not bound to picolinate. The best chromium is yeast-bound, but that may be hard to find as this is the most expensive way of binding chromium. We rarely get full nutrition from our food as so much processing goes into the food industry now.
2. Get plenty of balanced protein. Count the grams of protein you have in your diet. People with anxiety conditions need a high-protein diet. See to it that you have 65 grams of protein in your diet each day. You may want to supplement your diet with a high protein drink to ensure you get plenty of protein. The body creates natural anti-anxiety agents from protein. So those with anxiety conditions need to be sure they give the body the raw ingredients it needs to create the chemicals to combat anxiety.
3. Calcium - 2000 mg (milligrams) per day - Calcium is a natural tranquilizer. Be sure it is balanced with magnesium as this will help reduce anxiety, nervousness, tension, muscle spasms and tics that can accompany anxiety conditions. Check your calcium levels in your daily diet to add to this total daily intake. Take a calcium supplement if needed. Rule of thumb is intake of magnesium should be $\frac{1}{2}$ of the amount of daily calcium intake. Always take your calcium at night as the body absorbs calcium better while sleeping.

4. Check your iron levels - Low iron levels can contribute to anxiety and panic attacks. Always make sure that your iron stores are running a little on the high side. You can get this checked with a regular lab draw at your primary medical provider's office.
5. Add extra Vitamin C - People with anxiety conditions need high levels of vitamin C - Start with 250 mg (milligrams) and build up every three days, or so to as high as 3000-5000 mg - This is necessary to protect your adrenal glands (which are affected by excessive anxiety) and also important for proper brain function. Vitamin C is known to reduce anxiety and is vital for managing stress. Make sure your Vitamin C is *time-released* so that you do not urinate out this valuable vitamin. With a time-released brand, your body can absorb this as it needs during the day.
6. Take a B-vitamin complex 50 mg - This is 50 mg of all the essential B vitamins. The B vitamins work the best when taken together. Many people with anxiety need more B vitamins than the average (even if taking a vitamin supplement). Be sure to take your B vitamin in the morning as taking it too late in the day can contribute to insomnia.
7. Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid (GABA) 750 mg three times per day. This is the natural substance that our body uses to combat anxiety. People with anxiety conditions are lower in the substance.
8. Take extra Inositol - As directed on the label as this has a natural tranquilizing effect
9. Check your Zinc - Look at your multivitamin / mineral and google foods that contain zinc - People with anxiety disorders need zinc in their diet - If your total daily intake is under 100 mg, either take a zinc supplement or add zinc holding foods to your diet. Do not exceed 100 mg of zinc in your daily diet from all dietary sources.

10. Add some Chromium - (Do not use Chromium Picolinate) - Chromium deficiency can cause symptoms of anxiety. You can add 100 mg to 200 mg daily.

Do not take any of the following supplements if you are on a prescription for depression or anxiety:

1. Consider DL-Phenylalanine (DLPA) 600-12,000 mg (milligrams) daily increases the brain's production of natural endorphins which helps reduce anxiety and stress. You should know if this is going to improve your anxiety symptoms within 3 weeks. Discontinue this supplement if no improvement has been seen within that time. Be sure to google this supplement to see if it conflicts with any medication or medical conditions related to you.
2. Consider L-Glutamine - 500 mg three times per day. Be sure to take this on an empty stomach with water or juice. Do not take it with milk. If you take it with your vitamin C and B vitamins, it will absorb better. Be sure to google this supplement to see if it conflicts with any medication or medical conditions related to you.
3. Consider L-Tyrosine - 500 mg three times per day on an empty stomach. It has been shown to reduce anxiety. Be sure to google this supplement to see if it conflicts with any medication or medical conditions related to you.
4. Consider L-Glycine - 500 mg three times per day on an empty stomach. Be sure to google this supplement to see if it conflicts with any medication or medical conditions related to you.

There are also herbs and herbal compounds that are particularly effective in treating anxiety conditions:

5. Ashwagandha - This is an Indian ginseng that will improve the mental condition of most people with anxiety conditions within three months. Take as directed on the bottle and always stay with the same brand as there are

variations in strengths and strains within different companies. Be sure to google this herb to see if it conflicts with any medication or medical conditions related to you.

6. Suanzaorentang - This is a Chinese herbal blend that has been very effective at treating anxiety. As early as 1986, research on this ancient herbal blend showed this combination to be nearly as effective at treating anxiety as Valium. It has been shown to treat fatigue, irritability, and insomnia. When taken three times per day, the herbal combination, unlike the drug, Valium, improved psychomotor skills and produced no known side effects. In another study, done in Europe, this same combination helped people whose anxiety attacks were so severe that they experienced heart palpitations, chest pains, and shortness of breath (Keville, 1996) Be sure to google this herb to see if it conflicts with any medication or medical conditions related to you. This herbal complex may not be available in the United States.
7. Other herbs have been used in treating anxiety and are shown to be effective:
 - A. Kava Kava
 - B. Passion Flower
 - C. Hops
 - D. Scullcap
 - E. California Poppy
 - F. Wild Lettuce
 - G. Wild Celery Seed
 - H. St. John's Wort
 - I. Valerian Herb
 - J. Siberian Ginseng
 - K. Chamomile
 - L. Catnip

M. Peppermint

N. Sage

O. Rosemary

P. Lemon Balm

8. There are various ways to prepare the herbs for ingestion:
 - A. Often the herbs will be available in capsule or tablet form. Follow the directions on the bottle or consult your naturopath for administration.
 - B. Some are available in tincture forms. Use the tinctures that contain alcohol sparingly.
 - C. If you decide to make a bulk herb tea, here is the general way to prepare a tea: Generally, use one Tablespoon of raw herb (or herb mix) to 4-6 oz. of boiling water. Pour the boiling water over the bulk herb and cover the container. Steep for 15-20 minutes and strain the bulk herb off. Drink a cup of tea usually four times per day. There is generally no reason not to sweeten the tea, if desired, with raw honey. Usually, it is not recommended to add lemon to the tea.

As always, be sure to google the herbs to see if there are any conflicts with any medication or medical conditions related to you.

Clinical Anxiety strikes 20 % of the known U.S. population and is probably undertreated. Our society is becoming more complex by the minute contributing to stress and anxiety rapidly. This condition can contribute to illness and even death significantly. It also is implicated in loss of work time and gainful employment. Every individual deserves the right to feel well emotionally.

With sincere hope for a better life, I offer you this information.

Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell

