

CALMING CUISINES: FOODS THAT HELP REDUCE STRESS AND SUPPORT OPTIMAL BRAIN HEALTH

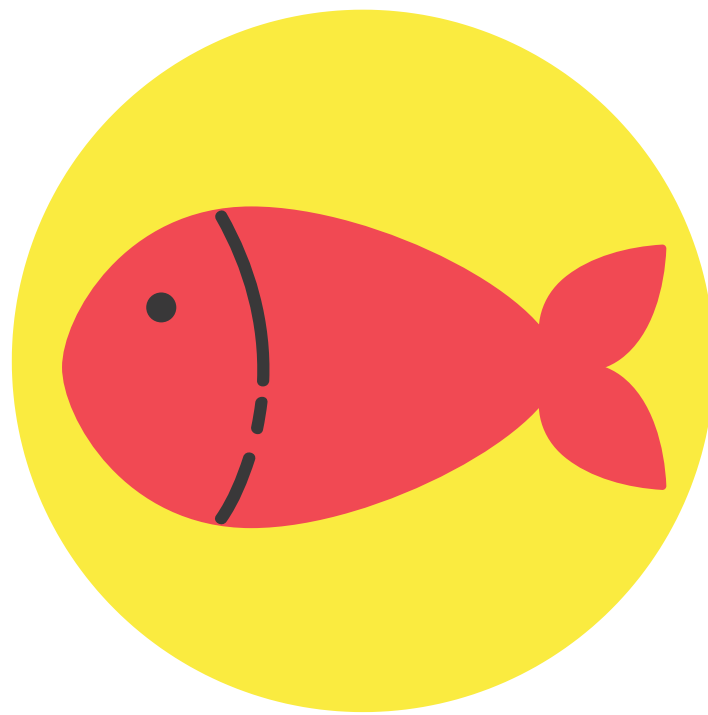
A nutritious, well-balanced diet can combat stress by providing benefits like a strong immune system and lower blood pressure. Certain foods can also boost calming chemicals in the brain (serotonin) or reduce stress hormones (cortisol and adrenaline). Try eating more of these stress-busting foods and be on your way to a more relaxed state of mind.



EGGS

Serotonin, a calming chemical released in the brain, is made from tryptophan. The protein in eggs can significantly boost your plasma levels of tryptophan.

TIP: Try having an omelet made with fresh vegetables for breakfast, or a couple hard boiled eggs for an afternoon snack!



SALMON

Omega-3 fatty acids, commonly found in fatty fish such as salmon, might have beneficial effects on stress and mental health, due in part to their combative effects on three major biological stress systems:

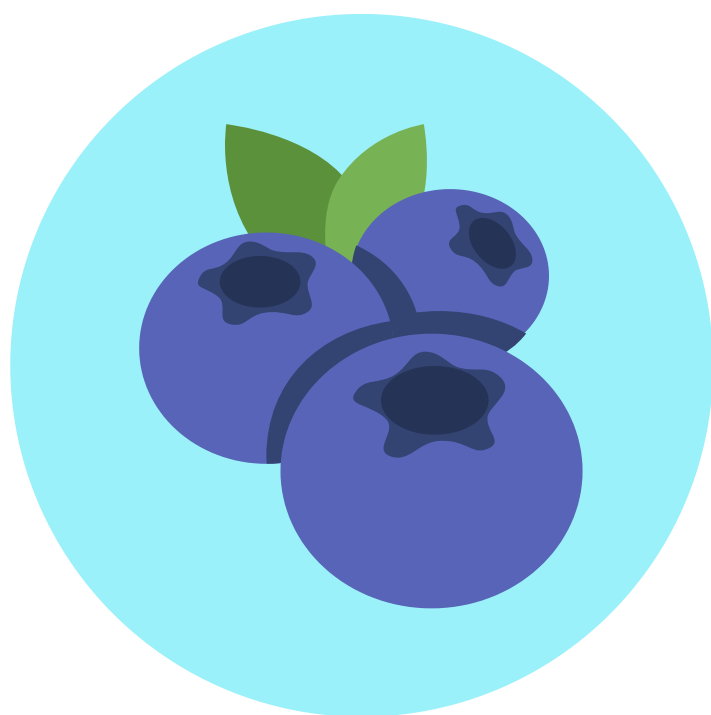
1. The immune-inflammatory system
2. The hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal-axis in the brain
3. The autonomic nervous system.



MATCHA

Matcha powder is made from Japanese green tea leaves and is rich in L-theanine, a non-protein amino acid with great stress-relieving properties. The powder can be used to make tea, include in baked goods, put in a smoothie, or enjoyed as a matcha latte!

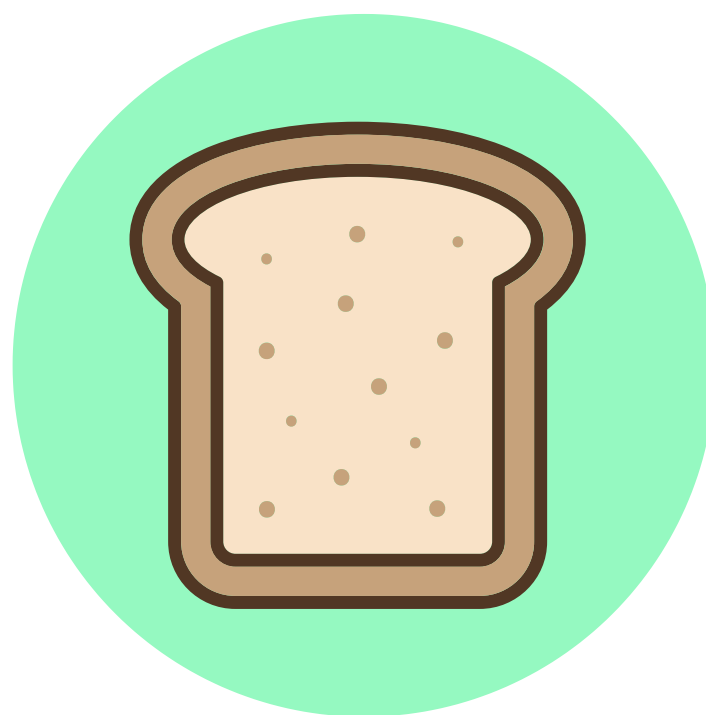
TIP: Add a splash of maple syrup or honey to taste!



BLUEBERRIES

Blueberries are high in flavonoid antioxidants which have strong anti-inflammatory effects. They may help reduce inflammation in the body related to stress, and protect it against future damage to the cells.

TIP: Eat a handful at breakfast or add them to your cereal or oatmeal!



COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES

Choosing complex, nutrient-rich carbohydrate sources such as whole grain bread, sweet potatoes, beans and peas may help lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol.

TIP: Swap out white bread for whole wheat or white potato for a sweet potato!



REDUCE ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

Alcohol consumption contributes to hypertension and reduced sleep quality, which can cause increased stress levels.

TIP: Try reducing your intake to 1-2 days of the week or try replacing your alcoholic beverage with a "mocktail" option.