

ANXIETY AND PANIC ATTACKS NUTRITION

Certain vitamins and minerals become depleted when the body is placed under constant stress. The most important of these are magnesium and the B group vitamins. As a general rule, the following can be taken for 12 weeks if you are experiencing anxiety, to rectify any deficiency, then diet can maintain your levels.

MULTI B

The best dose to start with is 50 mg per day. B 1235 and 6 need to be in the same proportion. Do not take after the evening meal, as it can keep you awake. The dose of Multi B is different for each person and varies with your stress levels. Your particular level has been reached when you experience "vivid visual imagery"- very bright technicolour dreams. It is normal for your urine to be bright yellow about 2 hours after taking a supplement.

Best food sources: Bananas, molasses and treacle, eggs, meat, potatoes, rockmelon, avocado, walnuts, pears and fish.

MAGNESIUM

This is lacking in soils in WA and is therefore not in high quantities in the foods containing magnesium. If you are low in this mineral, you may experience the following: Insomnia, facial tics, sensitivity to noise, balance problems, constipation, palpitations, muscle cramps and lack of energy. The best form is chelate, as oxide and hydroxide are very poorly absorbed. It is best taken with food as it requires good levels of stomach acid to be absorbed.

Best food sources: Cocoa, chicken, nuts- especially walnuts, oats and dark green leafy vegetables.

VITAMIN C

Vitamin C has been shown to dampen down the adrenalin response by returning it to normal more quickly. When the body is under stress of any kind, large amounts are used. Cravings for sweet foods often indicate you need more C. It is best taken in divided doses during the day and not after the evening meal as it will keep you awake.

Best sources: Fruit and vegetables. Best to avoid fruit juices as they are high in sugar, particularly grape and prune, and many have added sugar.

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ZINC

Because of the constant release of adrenalin (and therefore glucose from the liver) during anxiety, zinc may become depleted. Signs of zinc deficiency include low blood sugar, white spots on the fingernails, biting fingernails, lack of sense of taste and no appetite – “forgetting to eat”. Always take this with food or it will make you feel nauseated. WA soils are extremely deficient in this mineral.

Best sources: Red meat, sea food, especially oysters.

RECOMMENDED DOSES

Multi B	50 to 100mg per day
Vitamin C	1 to 3Gm per day
Magnesium	300mg plus per day
Zinc	15mg per day

Avoid the following if you are experiencing anxiety:

Caffeine- in coffee, soft drinks

Glucose and sugar

MSG and aspartame- these are neurotoxic.

Eat every three hours and you MUST eat breakfast. Because anxiety can cause lack of appetite, eat small snacks during the day. If nausea is a problem, ginger is useful, either chewing crystallized ginger or making tea with 1 tsp fresh minced ginger.