



# Can Changing Your Diet Really Help Anxiety?

Did you know that your diet can affect anxiety levels? If you're tired of only using medications for your anxiety, consider how you can incorporate lifestyle changes such as diet modifications to help.

As with any change you may be considering, talk to your doctor ahead of time about any concerns you may have.

## Try these diet strategies to help lessen anxiety symptoms:

1. **Eliminate alcohol.** Although there is a belief that alcohol can relax the body, it can be harmful for those with anxiety.
  - Alcohol affects the body in many ways, including making you more dehydrated. It can also affect hormone levels and other things that can lead to anxiety.
  - If you drink too much, you may not be eating enough food. Alcohol has a lot of calories and carbohydrates, but they're not healthy. Not getting the right nutrition can hurt your entire body and increase anxiety. Avoid using alcohol as a substitute for lunch or dinner.
  - **Experts point out that the toxins in alcohol can increase anxiety attacks.**
2. **Watch out for caffeine.** It may not be easy to stop your coffee habit, and mornings may be more difficult. However, eliminating caffeine can help reduce anxiety.
  - Too much coffee can act like a stimulant for anxiety.
  - Coffee can increase your heartbeat and make you feel as if you're having a panic attack.



- Caffeine is addictive, so you may have trouble eliminating it at first. Pay attention to the hidden sources of caffeine such as dark chocolate and other products.
3. **Beware of refined sugars.** Refined sugars can make anxiety worse, and these sugars are hiding in many of the foods you may eat.
- These types of sugars are included in a variety of products. Carefully read labels to ensure that there are no refined sugars.
  - Sugar acts like a stimulant, so your anxiety symptoms can increase.
  - **Refined sugars can be in many things that you might not even suspect,** including bagels, cereals, oatmeal, crackers, and other products. Even canned vegetables may have unnecessary added sugar.
4. **Get enough B vitamins.** Research shows that a lack of B vitamins in your body can contribute to anxiety. Pay attention to how many B vitamins are in your diet.
- It's easy to get a deficiency of these vitamins, so try to eat more legumes, meats, eggs, rice, leafy greens, and other sources of these nutrients.
  - Consider eating more asparagus and avocado. Studies have revealed that these two vegetables can lessen the symptoms of depression and anxiety. Avocado has B vitamins and asparagus has folic acid.
5. **Look for your own triggers and eliminate them.** You may have specific foods that trigger anxiety, so it's important to determine which foods can negatively affect you in this way.
- **In some cases, the anxiety-triggering foods or beverages are linked to traumatic events.** A difficult memory can rise to the surface after eating or drinking them, causing anxiety.



- In other cases, food intolerances and allergies may cause anxiety. There are reports that show some people react to dairy, and it can mimic some of the symptoms of anxiety.
- **Many of the common triggers include dairy, gluten, processed foods, soda, and fried foods.**
- Keep a food journal and track how you feel after eating dairy, fried foods, or other things you suspect may be triggers. Make a note about your emotional well-being before and after eating each item. This will help narrow down the list and make it easier to see what food should go.

The food that enters your body can affect more than just the scale. It can also affect anxiety levels. Pay attention to what you eat each day and keep track of anxiety symptoms that manifest themselves after you eat certain foods.