

# **ANXIETY, PANIC ATTACKS & NUTRITION**

## **(Managing your Vitamins and Minerals)**



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.

**Please note:** If you require advice or assistance in managing anxiety and/or panic attacks, WHFS Counsellors are available with experience in supporting mental health needs through counselling sessions and nutrition. For more details visit our [Counselling Services](#) page.

WHFS also has an onsite Dietitian available for individual consultations on general nutrition, as well as group talks and workshops. Visit the [Nutrition & Healthy Lifestyle](#) page for more details.

### **Vitamin B (Multi B)**

There is actually more than one type of 'Vitamin B' so the term 'Multi B' refers to all types together. Generally the best dose of Multi B to start with is 50 mg per day, but it is worth noting that Vitamins B<sup>1</sup>, B<sup>2</sup>, B<sup>3</sup>, B<sup>5</sup> and B<sup>6</sup> need to be in the same proportion.

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 for Multi B:**

- Bananas
- Molasses and treacle
- Eggs



- Meat
- Potatoes
- Rockmelon



- Avocado
- Walnuts
- Pears
- Fish



### **Magnesium**

This is lacking in soils in WA and is therefore is not in high quantities in the foods that do containing magnesium. The best form of Magnesium 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. If you are low in this mineral, you may experience the following:

- Insomnia
- Facial tics
- Sensitivity to noise
- Balance problems
- Constipation
- Palpitations
- Muscle cramps
- Lack of energy

#### **Best food sources for Magnesium:**

- Cocoa
- Chicken
- Nuts - especially walnuts
- Oats
- 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 food sources of Vitamin C:**

- Fruits e.g. oranges, guava, kiwi fruits 
- Vegetables e.g. broccoli, cauliflower 

However it is best to *avoid fruit juices* as they are high in sugar, particularly grape & prune juice.

## Zinc

Because of the constant release of adrenalin (and therefore glucose from the liver) during anxiety, zinc may become depleted. Always take this with food or it will make you feel nauseated. Signs of zinc deficiency include:

- Low blood sugar
- White spots on the fingernails
- Biting fingernails
- Lack of a sense of taste
- No appetite – “forgetting to eat”

### **Best food sources of Zinc:**

- Red meat e.g. lamb, beef 
- Seafood, especially oysters 

## Recommended Vitamin Doses (per day)

- ✓ Multi B: 50 - 100mg
- ✓ Magnesium: 300mg+
- ✓ Vitamin C: 1 - 3mg
- ✓ Zinc: 15mg

Also avoid the following if you are experiencing anxiety:

- ✗ Caffeine
- ✗ Glucose
- ✗ Sugar
- ✗ MSG
- ✗ Aspartame

## Things to remember

- !! You need to 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, having ginger can help this: You can either chewing crystallized ginger or making tea with 1 tsp fresh minced ginger.

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