



Antioxidants, how what we eat helps us stay healthy

You don't have to be ill to suffer from the effects of stress on your physical or mental health. During these stressful times healthy people can become more vulnerable to sickness. Stress and anxiety will weaken the immune system. What can you eat to stay as strong and healthy as possible?

The answer is foods rich in antioxidants. These foods can help ease the symptoms of anxiety and boost our resilience. The best way to get a variety of antioxidants in your diet is to eat foods that represent all the colours of the rainbow. Each colour provides its own unique antioxidant effect.

Antioxidants are substances naturally occurring in foods (flavonoids, carotenoids, isothiocyanates, resveratrol, tannins, as well vitamins A, C and E, and minerals such as selenium are effective antioxidants). Eating well can't guarantee we won't become ill, but antioxidants can prevent or slow damage to cells caused by free radicals. These are unstable molecules that the body produces as a reaction to environmental stressors and other pressures.

Antioxidant-rich foods to ensure are in your fridge or pantry:

- Berries such as strawberries, blueberries and raspberries
- Green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale and collard greens
- Orange-colored foods including sweet potatoes, carrots and apricots
- Nuts, seeds and lentils
- Tomatoes and tomato products
- Garlic
- Whole wheat
- Coffee, tea and dark chocolate
- Purple grapes, purple grape juice, pomegranates and wine

It is important to note that although antioxidant supplements are available, experts recommend getting your daily dose directly from a food source to reap optimal benefits.