

**VOL. 1 SEPTEMBER 2020**  
**IN THIS ISSUE: STRESS MANAGEMENT**



**Stress**

In this newsletter we will discuss what is stress some simple effective ways to cope with stress in our everyday lives. Everyone experiences stress from time to time. Stress can lead to physical and mental health risks. Stress causes unpleasant effects on the body and mind. The more we understand stress, the better we can tackle it. In response to these strains your body automatically increases blood pressure, heart rate, respiration, metabolism, and blood flow to you muscles.

However, when you are constantly reacting to stressful situations without making adjustments to counter the effects, you will feel stress which can threaten your health and well-being. Chronic stress increases the risk of developing depression and anxiety.

**Some Impacts of Mental Stress**

**Stress and Immune System**

**Stress and PTSD**

**Stress and Cognitive**



Chronic stress and prolonged activation of the immune system negatively affect how the brain functions. A prolonged activation of the immune system is linked to physical illness, depression and anxiety.



Short-term stress can also lead to a mental health condition. Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can develop after experience of an extremely traumatic or stressful event.



People who are chronically stressed may experience confusion, difficulty concentrating, trouble learning new information, and/or problems with decision-making.

**Chronic Stress**

**Emotional Stress**



When the stress response becomes long term (chronic), in many cases, the system controlling the stress response is no longer able to return to its normal state. Attention, memory, and the way we deal with emotions are negatively impacted. This long-term stress can contribute to both physical and mental illness.



When you are stressed you may experience many different feelings, including anxiety, fear, anger, sadness, or frustration. These feelings can sometimes feed on each other and produce physical symptoms, making you feel even worse. Stressful life events can contribute to symptoms of anxiety and depression.

## COPING TECHNIQUES FOR STRESS

*“To meditate is to live simply and honestly in the world as it is.”<sup>1</sup>*

—Jonathan C. Smith



The term **“Yoga”** stands for “union.” It is a philosophical science seeking unity of an individual's soul with absolute reality. Yoga is gaining importance across the world. While the western world views yoga as a form of physical exercise, the eastern world recognizes yoga more holistically as a means of integration of the body and the mind. Yoga has its origin from the ancient times. It is an integration of mind, body, and soul. Yoga practice is known to improve a person's physical and mental functioning. Yoga has also been beneficial as a complementary treatment for psychiatric conditions such as schizophrenia, depression, anxiety, insomnia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and cognitive impairment in the elderly.



**Meditation** is the practice of thinking deeply or focusing one's mind for a period of time. While there are many forms of meditation, the ultimate goal is a feeling of relaxation and inner peace, which can improve mental health. Managing stress is important for overall health. One way to do this is to practice meditation. Many people start meditating to manage stress, reduce anxiety, and to cultivate peace of mind. Meditation is a mind and body practice that has a long history of use for increasing calmness and physical relaxation, improving psychological balance, coping with illness, and enhancing overall health and well-being.



**Mindfulness** is an integrative, mind-body based approach that helps people to manage their thoughts and feelings and mental health. Mindfulness exercises are ways of paying attention to the present moment. Mindfulness helps people to become more aware of their thoughts, feelings, and body sensations so that instead of being overwhelmed by them. Practising mindfulness can give more insight into emotions, boost attention and concentration, and improve relationships..




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## **FOODS TO IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

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### **Salmon**

While fish, in general, is a healthy choice, salmon is at the top of the list. It's a "fatty" fish, containing high amounts of omega-3 fatty acids, which have been linked to a reduction in mental disorders such as depression. Omega-3s have been shown to boost learning and memory as well. Salmon also has a naturally high-occurring amount of vitamin D, which is often added to foods and has been linked to lower rates of depression. Other types of fish with high Omega-3 counts include tuna, mackerel, and herring.

### **Avocados**

Avocados are full of vitamin K and folate, which help protect your brain against stroke. They also provide a boost to your memory and concentration. Avocados serve up a high dose of lutein, too, which studies have linked to improved brain function.

### **Nuts**

Like salmon, nuts are an excellent source of omega-3 fatty acids, helping to fight depression. Cashews, for example, help provide oxygen to the brain with a dose of magnesium.

### **Tomatoes**

The source of a tomato's red hue, lycopene is classified as an all-around beneficial phytonutrient. One of the many health boosts it provides is in the fight against brain disease. It's been shown to delay the onset and progression of Alzheimer's Disease, fighting off cell damage. In addition, lycopene has been shown to help with memory, attention, logic and concentration.

### **Dark Chocolate**

Could this be the best news on the list? Dark chocolate is categorized as such due to its cocoa content, which you won't find in milk chocolate. And the darker the better — 85% cocoa or more is the most beneficial. Dark chocolate contains high levels of flavonoids, a type of antioxidant. It has been shown to boost attention and memory, enhance mood and help fight cognitive decline in older adults. Just remember, chocolate should still be consumed in moderation. The next time you go shopping, consider adding one or more of these to your grocery list. In addition to providing general health benefits, you'll be able to provide an outstanding source of nourishment to your brain as well.

### **Whole Grains**

Many types of food fall under this category, like beans, soy, oats and wild rice. While your body and brain utilize carbohydrates for energy, too often we consume simple carbs, which lead to blood sugar spikes. Foods classified as whole grains contain complex carbohydrates, which leads to glucose being produced more slowly, as a more even and consistent source of energy. Also, whole grains help the brain absorb tryptophan, which means that when eaten in conjunction with foods like chicken and turkey, you can further reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety while boosting brain function.

### **Yogurt**

Yogurt and other products containing active cultures are excellent sources of probiotics. Often associated with digestive health, probiotics have been shown to play a role in reducing stress and anxiety. Yogurt can also provide you with potassium and magnesium, which helps oxygen reach the brain, further improving its ability to function.

### **Olive Oil**

Pure, extra virgin olive oil has been quite popular as of late as a part of healthy Mediterranean-style diets. This type of oil contains polyphenols, which help to remove the effects of proteins linked to Alzheimer's Disease. It can also help improve learning and memory.

### **Chicken**

Chicken, is a delicious lean-protein choice containing the amino acid tryptophan help your body produce serotonin — which is vital in helping your brain manage your mood, fight depression and help maintain strong memory.



**Nirvana Health & Wellness, Inc**  
**Executive Medical Director, Dr. Adityanjee**  
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**<https://www.nirvanahealthandwellnessinc.com/>**

**Westlake Location:**  
24700 Center Ridge Road, #230, Westlake, OH 44145  
Phone: 440-872-6548  
Fax: 440-250-0842 | Email Address:  
nirvanahwi@gmail.com

**Lorain Location:**  
4520 Oberlin Avenue, Lorain, OH 44053  
Phone: 440-444-0083  
Fax: 440-444-0406 | Email Address:  
nirvanahwi@gmail.com

**Are you interested in Yoga, Meditation, Mindful Awareness?**  
**We are currently working on an interest list for future upcoming Stress Reduction Events and Sessions.**