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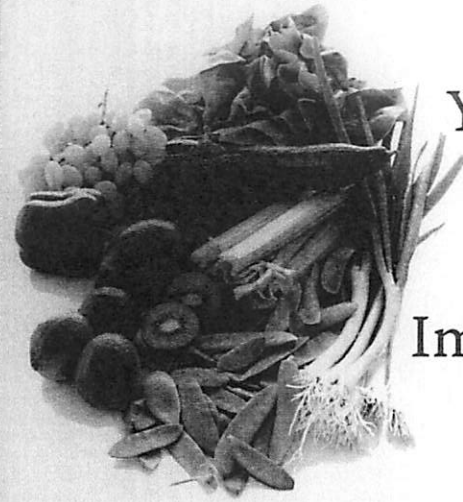
THE ANTIANXIETY FOOD SOLUTION SCOTT

DISCOVER THE AMAZING POWER OF FOODS & NUTRIENTS!

the anti-anxiety food solution



How the Foods You Eat Can Help You Calm Your Anxious Mind, Improve Your Mood & End Cravings

TRUDY SCOTT, CN
Foreword by James Lake, MD

CHAPTER 1

Figure Out Your Optimum Antianxiety Diet

Eating real, whole, good-quality food is the foundation of this book and any program to prevent and alleviate mental health issues such as anxiety, obsessive tendencies, worry, panic attacks, and depression, as well as to maintain optimal mental health. This approach, combined with eating according to your own unique needs, will help calm your anxious mind.

Although there is much clinical evidence for the benefits of eating this way, food and its effects on mental health have not been studied a great deal until recently. However, recent studies have shed more light on the importance of diet. I'm thrilled and anticipate more interest in this area of research. An Australian study looking at both anxiety and depression among women found a link between better diet quality and better mental health (Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Hodge, et al. 2010). Among the participants, those who ate a whole foods diet of vegetables, fruit, fish, whole grains, and grass-fed lean red meat and lamb had a lower likelihood of both anxiety and depression. The researchers referred to this as a "traditional" diet. Those who ate a typical Western diet, replete with processed, refined, fried, and sugary foods and beer, were more likely to experience depression. There was also a tenuous relationship between depression and what the researchers referred

to as a "modern" diet of fruit, salads, fish, tofu, beans, nuts, yogurt, and red wine. However, the authors proposed that this may be due to women attempting to improve their mental health by improving their diets, since this sort of diet was more often consumed by younger and more educated women.

Other recent food studies have focused on depression, and results indicate that there's a strong link between good mental health and eating real, whole foods. This very likely has a bearing on anxiety, as anxiety often co-occurs with depression and there are often common underlying biochemical mechanisms in both. For example, a recent British study of 3,486 middle-aged men and women compared those eating a Mediterranean-style, whole foods diet, plentiful in vegetables, fruit, and fish, to those who ate a diet high in processed foods, sweetened desserts, fried foods, processed meat, refined grains, and high-fat dairy products (Akbaraly et al. 2009). Those who ate a diet high in processed foods had a higher risk of depression five years later. Another recent study (Sanchez-Villegas et al. 2009), which looked at over ten thousand Spanish adults, found that those who consumed a Mediterranean diet similar to that in the British study, along with moderate amounts of alcohol, were less prone to depressive disorders.

An editorial in the *American Journal of Psychiatry* offered a very powerful comment on the three food and mood studies outlined previously: "It is both compelling and daunting to consider that dietary intervention at an individual or population level could reduce rates of psychiatric disorders. There are exciting implications for clinical care, public health, and research" (Freeman 2010, 245).

An even more recent study (Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Nicholson, et al. 2010), paralleling the earlier Australian study on diet, depression, and anxiety, found that women who ate a quality whole foods diet were less likely to have bipolar disorder. An added benefit is that eating real, whole, good-quality foods also helps prevent a variety of physical issues, including high blood pressure, irritable bowel syndrome, cancer, heart disease, and arthritis.

I encourage you to start with one of the antianxiety diets explained next, and then keep building on your knowledge and refining your choices as you continue reading this book. Bring a spirit of exploration to how you eat, learning new recipes and food preparation techniques, trying new foods, and finding enjoyment in

shopping, cooking, and eating. All the while, pay close attention to how you feel when you eat or exclude particular foods. If you simply start eating real, whole, good-quality foods, you'll notice how much better you start to feel moodwise, and you'll probably start to sleep better and have fewer cravings. It really is that simple! Remember, real food is the foundation and everything else in this book builds on this foundation.

For many people, just making food changes is enough to eliminate anxiety. I had one client with anxiety, moodiness, and very poor-quality sleep who saw a huge improvement after simply switching from eating fast foods once a day to eating real foods, eating regularly (including eating breakfast), and getting enough protein, especially at breakfast.

The Antianxiety Food Solution Diets

Based on my experience, there is no single antianxiety food solution that works for everyone. We all have distinctive nutritional needs, sometimes referred to as biochemical individuality. This means there's no one-size fits-all approach—for diet, exercise, nutritional supplements, or medications. Determining and meeting your unique nutritional needs is key in overcoming anxiety, and most mental and physical health problems.

This section provides an overview of four antianxiety diets that I've found to be effective, with details on all the foods to include and avoid, as well as bonus foods you can try later, once you've established a good foundation for your own antianxiety diet. Some trial and error is involved in finding the optimal diet for you. The progression I outline next provides a methodical approach that will help you determine whether you have various common food sensitivities that could be contributing to your anxiety.

I'll discuss the specifics of what to include and what to avoid in the remainder of this chapter, and then cover some important topics in greater detail in other chapters: avoiding sugar (chapter 2) and caffeine (chapter 3), how to assess for any food sensitivities (chapter 4), and how to get the most from the food you eat by improving your digestion (chapter 5). Taking various supplements based on your individual needs is discussed throughout the rest of the book where relevant.

Antianxiety Food Solution Diets	Diet 1: Gluten free	Diet 2: Gluten free, dairy free	Diet 3: Grain free, dairy free	Diet 4: Traditional foods
What to Include				
Eat real, whole, good-quality foods, preferably organic	okay	okay	okay	okay
Eat frequently enough for blood sugar stability	okay	okay	okay	okay
Eat quality animal protein, such as grass-fed meat, wild game, pastured poultry and eggs, and wild fish	okay	okay	okay	okay
Eat nonstarchy fresh vegetables, such as cauliflower, broccoli, and green, leafy vegetables	okay	okay	okay	okay
Eat fresh fruit, such as berries, apples, oranges, and peaches	okay	okay	okay	okay
Eat good fats from olive oil, butter, coconut oil, avocados, nuts, and seeds	okay	okay	okay	okay
Keep hydrated with water, herbal teas, and fresh vegetable juices	okay	okay	okay	okay
Eat legumes, such as lentils, chickpeas, and black beans	okay	okay		okay
Eat starchy fresh vegetables, such as potatoes, sweet potatoes, and winter squash	okay	okay		okay
Eat gluten-free whole grains, such as brown rice, corn, quinoa, millet, and amaranth	okay	okay		okay

Antianxiety Food Solution Diets	Diet 1: Gluten free	Diet 2: Gluten free, dairy free	Diet 3: Grain free, dairy free	Diet 4: Traditional foods
Consume dairy, such as milk, cheese, yogurt, and kefir	okay			okay
Eat whole grains that contain gluten, such as wheat, rye, and barley				okay
What to Avoid				
Avoid grains that contain gluten, such as wheat, rye, and barley	avoid	avoid	avoid	
Avoid dairy		avoid	avoid	
Avoid all grains, starchy vegetables, and legumes			avoid	
Avoid empty foods, such as bad fats, processed foods (especially those with artificial ingredients), genetically modified foods, caffeine, and sugar, artificial sweeteners, and sodas	avoid	avoid	avoid	avoid
What to Try Later				
Eat bonus foods, such as organ meats, fermented foods, broths, and fresh herbs	okay	okay	okay	okay

Antianxiety Food Solution Diet 1: Gluten Free

I recommend starting with a gluten-free diet, and I typically have my clients begin with this approach. Eat this way for two weeks and then reintroduce gluten, following the instructions for a gluten elimination-challenge trial as described in chapter 4. If you already know you don't tolerate gluten well, there's obviously no need to reintroduce it. This diet is also advocated by Julia Ross in both *The Mood Cure* (2004) and *The Diet Cure* (2011).

Antianxiety Food Solution Diet 2: Gluten Free and Dairy Free

If you try the previous diet for a few weeks and still have problems that seem to be diet related, eliminate dairy for two weeks and then reintroduce it, again as described in chapter 4. Dairy is the next food group to be removed because it's a common food allergen, and also commonly a problem for people who are sensitive to gluten. If you already know you don't tolerate dairy well, there's obviously no need to reintroduce it, and you can begin with this diet, rather than a solely gluten-free diet. This is a modified version of the first diet.

Antianxiety Food Solution Diet 3: Grain Free and Dairy Free

If you try the second diet for a few weeks and still have anxiety and other mood issues, low energy, or sleep and digestive issues, try the third diet, which is the most restrictive. This diet is completely free of all grains (including gluten-free grains) and dairy, and also free of starchy vegetables and legumes. This is a modified version of the Paleolithic diet proposed by Loren Cordain in *The Paleo Diet* (2001) and the approach advocated by Natasha Campbell-McBride in *Gut and Psychology Syndrome* (2008).

Antianxiety Food Solution Diet 4: Traditional Foods

If you're following any of the previous diets and find you're doing well and free of anxiety, you can experiment with a traditional foods approach, which is the least restrictive and includes, among other things, fermented grains and raw dairy. Of course, if you have celiac disease, food allergies, or food sensitivities (discussed in chapter 4), continue to exclude the foods you have difficulty with. The traditional foods diet is a modified version of the approach proposed by Sally Fallon in *Nourishing Traditions* (2001).

Foods to Include

Once you've decided which diet you'll start with, use the preceding table to figure out which foods are included and then follow the guidelines in the next sections. Bear in mind that the diets outlined previously are somewhat generic. Depending on your unique needs, certain foods, categories of food, or approaches may be better for you than others. Experiment to find what works best for you, and feel free to mix and match. For example, you may find you feel best mostly adhering to the third diet and eating no grains, yet you tolerate some forms of dairy, such as yogurt. With all four diets, you may need to reduce or totally eliminate fruit for a short time if candida is an issue (see chapter 5).

While you're figuring out what diet is best for you, keep a detailed food log (appendix 2) to help you determine how different foods may be affecting you. Also, be aware that when I work with clients, we typically address many of the other areas covered in this book alongside a basic dietary approach. So as you begin to experiment with the antianxiety diets, I encourage you to read ahead and make other changes that seem appropriate to your situation. However, if this starts to get overwhelming and you feel more anxious, just implement the solutions in a way that works for you, even if that means taking baby steps and making just one or two changes at a time. If you go that route, I suggest using what I call "eating levels of sophistication," a step-by-step approach that will

slowly but surely transition you away from a typical Western diet, sometimes called the standard American diet (SAD):

1. Avoid sugar, foods containing sugar, and "white foods" (white flour, white rice, white pasta, and other refined grains).
2. Avoid all boxed and processed foods and all foods containing artificial colors and other additives.
3. Avoid foods that you're sensitive to or that commonly cause problems, such as wheat (even whole or sprouted wheat).
4. Include more high-quality vegetables, fruit, and protein.
5. Be sure to eat breakfast (including some protein) and healthy snacks.
6. Switch to all or mostly organic foods and start to experiment with the bonus foods discussed later in this chapter.
7. For protein, switch to grass-fed meat, pastured poultry and eggs, and wild fish.
8. Eat fermented foods, soaked grains (if you tolerate grains), organ meats, and broths regularly.
9. Whenever possible, eat local and seasonal foods.

Eat Real, Whole, Good-Quality Foods

Real, whole, traditional, and unrefined foods are nutrient dense and as close to their natural state as possible. They come from nature, not a package, and are ideally local and in season, and preferably organic. It may be the way you ate as a child (if you were fortunate, as I was), or perhaps it's how your grandparents ate. Most real food is fresh and perishable, and doesn't have a long shelf life. You'll find these foods in your garden, on traditional (not agribusiness) farms, at farmers' markets and food co-ops, at fish markets

or in the ocean, and on the perimeters of the supermarket. They haven't been processed, manufactured, or packaged. They shouldn't have labels, and if they do, they shouldn't read like a chemistry experiment; the ingredients should be recognizable as real foods. Some examples are home-cooked vegetable soup instead of instant or canned vegetable soup, fresh cream instead of nondairy creamer, and home-cooked meat, rice, and fresh vegetables instead of a TV dinner.

A diet based on real, whole food truly does serve as the foundation for ending anxiety, providing key nutrients that are essential for the body's production of neurotransmitters and hormones. It is the synergistic combination of nutrients that is an antianxiety powerhouse: amino acids from proteins (such as eggs), the mineral zinc from red meat, the mineral magnesium from leafy, green vegetables, B vitamins from grains, omega-3 fatty acids from fish and meat, antioxidants from vegetables and fruit—and more. You really are what you eat. Hippocrates, the father of Western medicine, took that a step further, saying, "Let food be your medicine and your medicine be your food." More recently, orthomolecular psychiatrist Abram Hoffer made a similar point: "Physical and mental diseases are affected by what we put into our mouths—or fail to take in as nourishment" (Hoffer and Walker 1996, 204). The orthomolecular concept is simple: use optimal nutrition to heal and prevent disease and dysfunction, including anxiety.

Given that the food you eat is your fuel, quality is very important. Whenever possible, opt for choices that are organic, grass-fed, wild, pastured, and free of pesticides, hormones, and antibiotics. Red meat should be from animals that were grass-fed. Dairy products should come from cows, goats, or sheep raised in a similar way. For poultry and eggs, the ideal is pastured, meaning the birds forage in a pasture and aren't fed grain exclusively. In addition to being of better quality for our consumption, animals raised this way are also more humanely treated. Fish should be wild, not farmed, and produce should be organic or pesticide free, and preferably locally grown. Although I don't repeat this point throughout the book, eating real, whole, good-quality food is the foundation of any holistic approach for anxiety.

Eat Frequently Enough

While what you eat makes a huge difference with anxiety, when you eat can also be key. Skipping breakfast and not eating frequently enough during the day can result in low blood sugar, with symptoms including anxiety, nervousness, and irritability (Harp and Fox 1990). Following the guidelines in chapter 2, typically makes a huge difference. For now, I'll just say be sure to eat breakfast (with a good-quality protein source, such as eggs), eat three meals and at least two healthful snacks daily, and include carbohydrates, protein, and fats in all of your meals and most of your snacks.

Eat Quality Animal Protein

Although protein is also found in dairy and to a lesser extent in legumes, grains, nuts, and seeds, the most concentrated forms (and in my experience the most beneficial for mental health) are meat, poultry, eggs, and fish. Protein contains amino acids, and the protein you eat directly affects levels of amino acids in your blood and brain, which in turn affects levels of neurotransmitters that play a role in mood (Fernstrom 1981). This topic is discussed in detail in chapter 7.

If you are a vegetarian, I respect your personal choice in this matter, but I highly encourage you to be open to the possibility of trying animal protein. If you see benefits, as many of my formerly vegetarian clients with anxiety and depression do, then you'll know that this could play an important role in helping you overcome anxiety. If you're initially unwilling or unable to eat meat, don't despair. Consider these sources of protein: legumes, nuts, sprouts, hemp, dairy, and fermented or sprouted soy products like tempeh and tofu. Do this in conjunction with the dietary guidelines in this chapter, and make sure you don't rely heavily on processed soy products. Also consider supplementing with whey, pea, or rice protein powder; a free-form amino acid blend; additional iron, zinc, omega-3 fatty acids and B_{12}, if needed. And if you continue to have unresolved mood problems despite implementing the other suggestions in this book, please reassess and consider incorporating eggs and possibly fish into your diet, and then meat if you're willing to go

that far. If it's any consolation, I, too, was a vegetarian before I discovered the dietary factors involved in my anxiety, and I really do relate to your ethical concerns. However, based on my personal and clinical experience, I am no longer a fan of vegetarian and vegan diets, especially for those with mental health issues.

Red Meat

All of your animal protein should be free of antibiotics and hormones. With regard to red meat, the best quality is grass fed, and the Australian study mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Hodge, et al. 2010) found that including grass-fed red meat in the diet had mental health benefits. In fact, in an interview in January 2010, the lead researcher in that study, Dr. Felice Jacka, stated, "We've traditionally thought of omega-3s as only coming from fatty fish, but actually good-quality red meat, that is, naturally raised [meaning grass fed] has very good levels of omega-3 fatty acids, whereas red meat that comes from feedlots tends to be higher in omega-6 fatty acids—a fatty acid profile that is far less healthy and may in fact be associated with more mental health problems" (Cassels 2010). Via e-mail correspondence, Dr. Jacka informed me that "consumption of beef and lamb was inversely associated with depression.... Those eating less of this form of red meat were more likely to be depressed." Again, with the anxiety-depression link, and based on my clinical experience, eating red meat is also highly likely to benefit you if you have anxiety.

Meat from grass-fed cattle also contains more conjugated linoleic acids (CLAs), vitamin E, vitamin C, glutathione, and beta-carotene than grain-fed cattle (Daley et al. 2010)—all nutrients that help protect against cancer. In addition, red meat is a great source of vitamins B_6, B_{12}, and D, and minerals that are important for mood, including zinc, iron, and selenium. For some people, zinc and vitamin B_6 deficiency plays a key role in anxiety disorders (see chapter 8), and red meat can be a good source of both of these nutrients.

You may have concerns related to consuming red meat. However, recent studies suggest that there isn't enough evidence to support a positive association between consumption of red meat (and fat) and

colorectal cancer (Alexander and Cushing 2010) or ovarian cancer (Kolahdooz et al. 2010)—and that the quality of the meat may be more of an issue, with processed meats being a likely culprit (ibid; Micha, Wallace, and Mozaffarian 2010). Another recent study failed to find an association between meat consumption and risk of stroke (Preis et al. 2010). Finally, some reviews actually suggest that moderate consumption of lean red meat, and grass-fed beef in particular, is actually beneficial for heart health and overall health, and helps protect against cancer (Daley et al. 2010).

For the best-quality meat, buy from farmers' markets or local farmers if possible. If you can't find grass-fed meat locally and you're willing to purchase it online, check out U.S. Wellness Meats (see resources). They offer a great selection of good-quality grass-fed meat products (and poultry).

Poultry and Eggs

Poultry is an excellent source of amino acids, especially tryptophan, and the B vitamin niacin, and a good source of vitamin B_6 and selenium. Chickens foraging in a pasture have higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids than grain-fed chicken, so pastured chickens are best both for consumption and as a source of eggs. The next best choice is organic.

Like red meat, eggs also have a bad reputation, and many people ask me if it's okay to eat eggs, particularly egg yolks. Eggs truly are healthful and an important part of a diet based on real, whole foods, and recent research indicates that they don't actually contribute to heart disease (Jones 2009; Ruxton 2010). Eggs are a great source of affordable high-quality protein and contain selenium, iodine, and vitamins A and D. The yolk is a wonderful source of choline, which is very important for brain health. Choline is a component of lecithin, a group of substances in the yolk that actually helps with fat digestion. However, eggs are one of the common causes of food sensitivity (discussed in chapter 4), so keep this in mind. Also, be aware that to get 20 to 30 grams of protein, a good serving size of protein for a meal, you need to eat three medium-sized eggs.

Fish and Other Seafood

Seafood is a great source of amino acids, omega-3 fatty acids, zinc, iodine, iron, calcium, selenium, and vitamins B_{12}, A, and D, many of which are beneficial for mood disorders. Again, for some people zinc deficiency plays a key role in anxiety disorders (see chapter 8), so seafood can be helpful. Oysters have particularly high levels of zinc, and mussels, clams, and crab have good levels as well.

The Australian, Spanish, and British studies discussed at the beginning of the chapter (Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Hodge, et al. 2010; Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Nicholson, et al. 2010; Sanchez-Villegas et al. 2009; Akbaraly et al. 2009) all found that including fish in the diet improved mental health. Another study (Tanskanen et al. 2001) found that the prevalence of depression was lower in countries where consumption of seafood is high. Given the link between anxiety and depression, it's possible that seafood consumption could also help reduce the incidence of anxiety. Many studies have looked at how supplementing with omega-3 fish oils affects mental health. Some have shown mood improvements (for example, Haag 2003), while others have shown no real benefits (for example, Stahl et al. 2008). My recommendation is that you eat fish, including some oily fish, such as salmon or sardines, and only supplement with fish oil if you know for sure you have low levels of omega-3s. (See chapter 8 for more on essential fatty acids.)

As always, quality is important. Wild fish is the best choice, in part because farmed fish contains antibiotics and artificial colors. In addition, one animal study found a link between farmed fish and increased risk of diabetes (Ruzzin et al. 2010). Among wild ocean fish, Pacific halibut and cod are good choices; in terms of freshwater fish, trout is a good choice. Do eat some oily fish, such as Alaskan salmon, sablefish, sardines, and pilchards, as they contain excellent levels of omega-3 fatty acids. Sardines may be an acquired taste, but they really are great, and they're also very affordable and easy to take with you when you travel. Although I generally recommend against canned foods, I do think they're a good option when it comes to salmon, sardines, mussels, oysters, and, occasionally, tuna. One caveat in regard to tuna: eat it in moderation or make sure you purchase from a source that tests mercury levels. And in general, select fish canned in olive oil or water, not cottonseed oil, and make

sure that any shellfish you purchase are harvested from clean, wild waters, since they tend to accumulate toxins.

Much research confirms that the many benefits of eating fish (in moderation) outweigh some of the risks of toxicity, and there is some evidence that the selenium that naturally occurs in certain fish and shellfish may offer protection from mercury toxicity (Ralston and Raymond 2010). Smaller wild fish are the best choice because mercury and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) build up in farmed fish, shellfish, and larger fish, such as swordfish, shark, and California halibut. It's best to avoid these, and especially important for children, pregnant and breastfeeding women, and anyone with health problems, physical or mental. Since you're reading this book to help with your anxiety, that list includes you.

For good information on safe and environmentally sound seafood, visit the website of the Monterey Bay Aquarium (see resources). If you're fortunate enough to be near the ocean, buy fresh fish from fish markets. Otherwise, purchase fresh or frozen fish from your local store. If you're willing to purchase seafood online, Vital Choice (see resources) is a great source of good-quality seafood.

Sources of animal protein: Red meat (such as beef, lamb, bison, and wild game) from grass-fed animals, poultry and eggs from pastured birds, wild fish (such as sole, salmon, sardines, and pilchards) and other seafood (such as shrimp, mussels, and oysters), and whey protein powder (although derived from dairy and, strictly speaking, not a real, whole food, whey is included here because it's a concentrated source of high-quality protein).

How much to eat: Eat a 3- to 4-ounce serving of quality protein three times a day. Each 3- to 4-ounce serving is a palm-sized portion and provides 20 to 30 grams of protein. Three eggs is equivalent to one protein serving providing 20 to 30 grams of protein. A serving of whey should be 20 to 30 grams of protein. Eat fish two or three times a week.

Eat Nonstarchy Fresh Vegetables

Vegetables are an important part of the whole foods diets that proved so beneficial for mood in the four food studies mentioned throughout this chapter (Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Hodge, et al. 2010; Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Nicholson, et al. 2010; Sanchez-Villegas et al. 2009; Akbaraly et al. 2009). They provide minerals, such as calcium, magnesium, manganese, potassium, and zinc; many of the B vitamins; and antioxidants, such as vitamins A, C, E, and K. Many of these nutrients play an important role in mood and emotional well-being. In addition, the antioxidants in vegetables (and fruits) provide protection against increased oxidative stress, a physiological condition characterized by excessive levels of free radicals that's often associated with mood disorders (Tsaluchidu et al. 2008). It's best not to boil vegetables, as this leaches out many of these nutrients. If you do boil vegetables, try to use the water in a soup, sauce, or broth.

Fresh local or homegrown produce that's organic or pesticide free is typically more nutrient dense and often tastes better (Davis 2009). An added bonus is that eating this way is also beneficial for the earth, as it doesn't introduce synthetic chemicals into the environment. Studies of farmworkers have shown a link between pesticide exposure and cognitive and psychological problems, including anxiety and depression (Mearns, Dunn, and Lees-Haley 1994). More recently, a study found that even low levels of pesticides in conventionally grown vegetables and fruit increased children's risk of developing attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder (Bouchard et al. 2010). Hopefully more studies will examine the impacts of pesticides on the nervous system.

The Environmental Working Group, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting public health and the environment, regularly issues a shopper's guide to the "dirty dozen" and the "clean fifteen" (2010). The "dirty dozen" are fruits and vegetables grown conventionally that are mostly likely to be contaminated with pesticides; the "clean fifteen" are those least likely to be contaminated. Organic is always a better choice for your health and the environment, and this is especially the case when purchasing the "dirty dozen": apples, bell peppers, blueberries, celery, cherries, grapes,

kale or collard greens, nectarines, peaches, potatoes, spinach, and strawberries.

Because the "clean fifteen" are lowest in pesticides, they don't necessarily have to be organic: asparagus, avocados, cabbage, cantaloupe, eggplant, grapefruit, honeydew, kiwi, mangoes, onions, pineapple, sweet corn, sweet peas, sweet potatoes, and watermelon.

Nonstarchy fresh vegetables: Artichokes, asparagus, avocados, bell peppers, bok choy, burdock, carrots, celery, cilantro, cruciferous vegetables (such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and cauliflower), cucumber, daikon, eggplant, fennel, garlic, ginger, green beans, green leafy vegetables and salad greens (such as arugula, beet greens, chard, collard greens, kale, lettuce, mixed baby greens, mustard greens, nettles, and spinach), mushrooms, onions, parsley, radishes, sweet peas, summer squash (such as crookneck squash, pattypans, and zucchini), tomatoes, turnips, and water chestnuts.

How much to eat: Aim for at least four and preferably more servings of nonstarchy vegetables a day. A serving is about 1 cup for cooked vegetables, or double that for raw leafy greens and salads.

Eat Fresh Fruit

Fruits are also an important part of the whole foods diets that had proven benefits for mood (Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Hodge, et al. 2010; Jacka, Pasco, Mykletun, Williams, Nicholson, et al. 2010; Sanchez-Villegas et al. 2009; Akbaraly et al. 2009). They provide similar nutritional benefits as vegetables, as explained previously, and also come with the same concerns about pesticides, so be sure to follow the Environmental Working Group's recommendations in regard to the "dirty dozen" and "clean fifteen."

Fresh fruit: Apples, apricots, bananas, blackberries, blueberries, cantaloupe, cherries, cranberries, figs, grapefruit, grapes, honeydew, kiwi, lemons, mangoes, melons, nectarines, oranges, papayas, peaches, pears, pineapple, plums, raspberries, strawberries, tangerines, and watermelon.

How much to eat: Two to four servings daily (less of the higher-sugar tropical fruits). A serving is typically equivalent to about one small apple or ½ cup of berries. And remember, you may have to reduce or totally eliminate fruit for a short time if candida is an issue.

Eat Good Fats

For several decades, dietary fat has had a bad reputation, but this is undeserved. Fats are key for the nervous system, hormonal health, and many physiological processes. So you really do need good fats and shouldn't try to avoid or restrict them.

Many studies support the emotional and physical benefits of consuming adequate amounts of good fats. In a study comparing a group deriving 41 percent of their calories from fat with a group getting 25 percent of their calories from fat, the group eating more fat had less anxiety, less anger, and better overall mood—with no appreciable differences in total cholesterol, LDL (so-called bad cholesterol), or triglycerides (Wells et al. 1998). One review of the relationship between dietary fats and heart disease (Ramsden et al. 2009) found that the quality of fats was more important than the quantity. The authors of that study propose trans fats and vegetable-based fats are problematic, whereas saturated fats (including coconut oil) aren't a risk factor in heart disease. Olive oil, an important component of the Mediterranean diet and widely recognized for its many health benefits, helped reduce anxiety in a recent animal study (Pitozzi et al. 2010). Another important reason to include sufficient dietary fats is that they help the body absorb carotenoids (such as beta-carotene) from salad greens and vegetables (Brown et al. 2004). Joseph Pizzorno, a prominent naturopathic physician, discusses the effectiveness of flaxseed oil in helping patients with agoraphobia (fear of having a panic attack in an inescapable situation

or a situation where this would be embarrassing; this frequently manifests as avoidance of open spaces, public places, and crowds) and signs of fatty acid deficiency, such as dry skin, dandruff, brittle fingernails, and nerve disorders (Pizzorno and Murray 2000).

Because so many people have aimed to cut fat from their diets in recent decades, you may need a little extra help here, so I'll offer a few tips on how to incorporate more good fats into your diet. Try adding full-fat coconut milk to a smoothie, use it in the sauce for a Thai curry, pour it over fruit as a dessert, or blend it with fresh fruit and then freeze it to make ice pops. You can buy fresh coconut, but for convenience you may want to use canned coconut milk (often found in the Asian section of supermarkets), coconut butter and oil (available in natural food stores), and unsweetened dried coconut. Coconut oil (like butter) can withstand higher cooking temperatures than other oils, including olive oil, so it's great to cook with.

Olive oil is great to enjoy on salads and vegetables to enhance absorption of their nutrients. Olive oil and vinegar or freshly squeezed lemon juice make a nice salad dressing, and plain olive oil is also wonderful over cooked whole grains. When shopping, make sure that the olive oil and any other oils you purchase are cold pressed and organic, and sold in a dark bottle.

Because butter is a saturated fat, it's good for higher-heat cooking, and melted butter is, of course, also wonderful on cooked vegetables. If you have a dairy sensitivity, try ghee (clarified butter); it's free of casein and lactose, the constituents of milk that typically cause problems.

Flaxseed oil, which is less stable than most of the other good fats, shouldn't be used in heated dishes (though you can drizzle it over cooked foods). Store it in the fridge, and make sure it's in an opaque bottle so it isn't damaged by exposure to light. Freshly ground flaxseeds (also to be stored in the fridge) are great in smoothies and on salads.

Avocados are great in salads and dips, as are nuts and seeds. Ideally, nuts should be soaked before you eat them. This neutralizes naturally occurring enzyme inhibitors and aids in digestion and absorption. Pumpkin seeds, which are higher in protein than many other seeds, are a good source of tryptophan, zinc, iron, omega-3 fatty acids, calcium, and B vitamins. After soaking them for about six hours, drain them well and try roasting them with spices, such

as sea salt, pepper, turmeric, and ginger. Not only is this a delicious snack, but it also helps control blood sugar levels and is a favorite of mine for mood health. One important note in regard to nuts and seeds: avoid store-bought dry-roasted versions, as they may contain harmful and rancid fats.

Of course, if you follow the other guidelines in this chapter, you'll also be getting some additional beneficial fats (both omega-3s and saturated fats) from meat, poultry, eggs, fish, and dairy. For example, full-fat dairy products, such as Greek yogurt and cottage cheese, provide a good source of fat, as do chicken skin and grass-fed meat. Pemmican, an early convenience food of the Native Americans, is made from ground jerky, animal fat, and cranberries, and it is my favorite high-energy snack "bar."

Good fats: Olives and olive oil, butter or ghee, coconut oil and other coconut products, avocados, flaxseeds and flax oil, other seeds (sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, and pumpkin seeds), nuts (such as almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, and walnuts), and pemmican.

How much to eat: Eat some form of good fat with each meal and snack. Each day, eat at least ¼ cup (and preferably more) of good fats and about ¼ cup of nuts and seeds, and be aware that you may need more, especially if you're eating fewer starches.

Keep Hydrated

Keep hydrated with at least 2 quarts (64 fluid ounces) of filtered water daily—or more if you're exercising or very active. In addition to plain water, try water with lemon or orange slices or a bit of cranberry juice, or drink herbal caffeine-free teas, such as mint, chamomile, lemon-ginger, licorice, and orange. Other good beverage options include broths, coconut water, freshly squeezed vegetable juices, and fermented beverages like kombucha (a fermented tea) or water kefir (all of the benefits of regular kefir, but without the dairy!). Drinking a cup of hot water (plain or with a bit of fresh lemon juice or ginger) first thing in the morning is not only tasty

and stimulating, it's also an Ayurvedic remedy for digestive and liver support.

Eat Legumes

Legumes are a good source of both protein and carbohydrates, and are also high in beneficial fiber. However, people have various degrees of difficulty with digesting them. Soaking legumes overnight and then cooking them with sea vegetables, particularly kombu, may improve digestibility. Sprouting is another good option. If you try these methods and still have difficulty with legumes, consider an elimination-challenge trial. Sensitivity is common enough that legumes are excluded from the third antianxiety diet outlined previously, as are starchy vegetables and grains. You'll have to experiment to determine what works for you. (See the information on the GAPS diet in chapter 4 for more on this.)

However, I recommend avoiding processed soy products altogether. Not only is soy a common food allergen, but it's also extremely difficult to digest. In addition, it may depress thyroid function and affect the reproductive system. Even if you tolerate soy, I recommend that you limit your consumption to small amounts of fermented soy in the form of miso and wheat-free tamari, and an occasional serving of organic tofu or tempeh. Doing a soy elimination-challenge trial is always an option if you're uncertain.

Legumes: Black beans, black-eyed peas, garbanzo beans (and hummus), lentils, pinto beans, and split peas, and others.

How much to eat: Unless you need to avoid legumes, aim for up to ½ cup of cooked legumes a few times a week.

Eat Starchy Fresh Vegetables

Although most people tolerate starchy vegetables just fine, for some people they're a problem. That's why they're excluded from the third antianxiety diet. You'll have to experiment and see whether

they're okay for you. (Again, see the information on the GAPS diet in chapter 4 for more on this.)

If you can tolerate starchy vegetables, aim for at least one serving a day. They're interchangeable with grains.

In terms of shopping and cooking, many of the same guidelines apply as for nonstarchy vegetables. When possible, choose vegetables that are organic, local, and in season, and steam or bake them rather than boiling (except in dishes like soups and stews, where the cooking liquid is part of the dish). Drizzle with butter or oil to enhance nutrient absorption and reduce their effect on blood sugar.

Starchy fresh vegetables: Beets, corn, peas, potatoes, sweet potatoes, turnips, and winter squash (such as butternut and pumpkin).

How much to eat: Unless you need to avoid nonstarchy vegetables, aim for at least one serving a day. One serving is about 1 cup, cooked.

Eat Gluten-Free Whole Grains

As with legumes and starchy vegetables, most people can tolerate gluten-free whole grains, but a subset of people can't, so they are excluded from the third antianxiety diet, which is totally grain free. You'll have to experiment to determine if you can tolerate them. (Again, see chapter 4 for more on this.)

If you can tolerate gluten-free whole grains, aim for at least one serving a day. They're interchangeable with starchy vegetables and grains with gluten.

Brown rice and wild rice are good sources of fiber and B vitamins. Quinoa is easy to digest, has the highest protein content of any grain, and gives you lots of energy; just be sure to rinse it well before cooking. Quinoa, millet, and amaranth are all cooked similarly to rice, but cook more quickly than most types of whole grain rice. While fresh corn is included in the starchy vegetables category, dried corn is more similar to a grain, and corn tortillas and cornbread can help take the place of other foods if you have a problem with gluten. For all grains, soaking or sprouting improves digestibility. When possible, soak grains for at least eight hours before

cooking. For morning oatmeal, soak the oats overnight; they'll cook very quickly the next morning.

Gluten-free whole grains: Amaranth, brown rice (and other whole grain rice), buckwheat, corn, millet, quinoa, and wild rice, preferably soaked or sprouted. Oats are also gluten-free, but if you have celiac disease or a severe gluten sensitivity, be sure to choose certified gluten-free oats due to cross-contamination in processing and transportation.

How much to eat: Aim for at least one serving a day of gluten-free whole grains. One serving is about 1 cup, cooked.

Consume Dairy

Dairy is a good source of protein and fat (provided you avoid fat-free dairy). It's also rich in tryptophan, which has important mood benefits (discussed in chapter 8). Although many people can tolerate dairy, it is one of the most common problematic foods, which explains why it's excluded from two of the antianxiety diets. Because of this, I encourage you to try a two-week dairy elimination-challenge trial even if you don't suspect you have a problem with dairy. That said, a few forms of dairy are less likely to be problematic, particularly whey, ghee (clarified butter), and, for some people, fermented or raw dairy products, or those made from sheep or goat milk.

Fermented dairy products, such as yogurt and kefir, are especially good choices. Not only are they more digestible, but they're also rich in probiotics, or beneficial bacteria. Raw dairy products are often easier to digest than pasteurized and homogenized. However, consuming raw dairy is controversial, so do your own research and consider this carefully to determine what you're comfortable with. Products made with goat or sheep milk may be easier for you to digest than those made with cow's milk. You really have to experiment to find what works for you, so give cottage cheese and hard cheeses a try too. Finally, you may do just fine with dairy as long as you eat it on a rotating basis, meaning that you only eat whatever dairy you can tolerate every three days or so.

Ideally, all dairy products that you consume should come from cows, goats, or sheep that are grass fed and not treated with antibiotics and hormones. The next best choice is organic. If you can't purchase organic dairy products, at least look for those produced without bovine growth hormone.

Dairy: Milk, cheese, yogurt, and kefir from grass-fed cows, sheep, or goats, along with butter, ghee, and whey.

How much to consume: If you tolerate dairy, aim to consume what you can tolerate and consider it part of your protein quota. In regard to whey, you can use 20 to 30 grams mixed into smoothies or other foods.

Eat Whole Grains That Contain Gluten

Given that gluten-containing grains are excluded from three of the four antianxiety diets, gluten-containing grains are really a better fit for the next section of this chapter: "Foods to Avoid." In my experience, gluten consumption and mood issues are often linked, so I encourage you to be cautious here. I recommend you try a two-week gluten elimination-challenge trial, as outlined in chapter 4, even if you don't suspect that it's an issue for you.

If you can tolerate gluten, aim for at least one serving of wheat, rye, or barley a day, keeping in mind that these grains are interchangeable with starchy vegetables and gluten-free grains.

Even if gluten isn't an issue, soaking, sprouting, and fermenting will enhance the digestibility and nutritional value of these grains. So enjoy them in the form of sourdough or sprouted whole grain bread, or crackers made with sprouted grains. And be sure to avoid processed and refined grains and foods made from them, like doughnuts, white bread, and commercial cookies and cakes.

Whole grains with gluten: Whole wheat, rye, and barley, preferably soaked, sprouted, or fermented (such as sourdough).

How much to eat: If you tolerate gluten, aim for at least one serving a day. One serving is about 1 cup, cooked.

Foods to Avoid

Depending on which diet you select and your own unique biochemistry, you'll need to avoid grains that contain gluten, dairy, and possibly even gluten-free grains, starchy vegetables, or legumes, or some combination of these foods. Avoiding empty foods is crucial to all four antianxiety diets.

Gluten, Dairy, and Grains

The rationale for excluding gluten-containing grains (wheat, rye, and barley) and dairy is that they commonly cause food sensitivities and can give rise to a variety of problems that may have a bearing on anxiety. Less commonly, all grains are a problem, as well as starchy vegetables and legumes. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, you'll have to experiment to determine what works for you. Chapter 4 discusses this topic in detail and will help you figure this out.

Avoid Empty Foods

"Empty foods" refers to foods that are devoid of vitality and lacking in nutrients An additional downside of these foods is that they often contain harmful substances that may contribute to anxiety. Some of the empty foods are covered in more detail in later chapters: various forms of sugar (and artificial sweeteners) in chapter 2, and caffeine and alcohol in chapter 3. Empty foods don't have a place in any antianxiety diet—or any other wholesome diet, for that matter.

Bad fats. Trans fats and hydrogenated oils, produced by industrial processes, are unrecognizable to the body and inherently unhealthful. Avoid them at all costs. Very recently, trans fats have been linked to an increased risk of depression (Sanchez-Villegas 2011). They frequently show up in margarine and a wide variety of processed foods, including coffee creamers and baked goods. And although vegetable oils have been touted as being more healthful, many of them are unstable and therefore unsuitable for dishes that are heated. With the exception of olive oil, I recommend that you steer clear of vegetable oils, such as canola, corn, and soy, and oils that are heat processed and deodorized, as well as commercial salad dressings that contain them. Hopefully you'll adopt an antianxiety diet that doesn't include processed foods, but if you do buy them on occasion, make sure they don't contain any of the bad fats discussed here.

Processed foods. Again, these foods don't have a place in any healthful diet, particularly not in an antianxiety diet. Avoid boxed and packaged foods that contain additives, preservatives, artificial colors, and flavoring agents, such as monosodium glutamate (MSG) and its many variants, including hydrolyzed protein, autolyzed yeast, and sodium caseinate. Common culprits are canned and instant soups, cheese spreads, breakfast cereals, and frozen TV dinners. Also avoid energy bars, which are often loaded with concentrated soy protein and sugar and typically contain wheat. Most canned goods, processed meats, fast food, and condiments fall into this category. Buy real, whole foods instead of processed, and you can't go wrong.

Genetically modified foods. Most of the nonorganic corn, soy, and canola grown in the United States is genetically modified (GM); therefore, any processed food that contains these ingredients is probably a GM food. Why avoid GM foods? At this point, we simply don't know the long-term health consequences. However, preliminary animal studies have shown harmful effects, so concerned researchers are calling for more studies (de Vendômois et al. 2010). Unfortunately, there's no requirement that foods containing GM ingredients be labeled as such, so eating real, whole foods and purchasing organic is the only way to be certain you aren't getting GM

foods. For the latest information on GM foods, consult the website of the Institute for Responsible Technology (see resources).

Avoid caffeine. This is covered in detail in chapter 3. In brief, you need to avoid coffee (even decaffeinated), tea (except herbal caffeine-free tea and green tea), possibly chocolate (except dark chocolate), and foods and beverages containing caffeine.

Avoid sugar, artificial sweeteners, and sodas. This is covered in detail in chapter 2. In brief, you need to avoid all forms of added and hidden sugar, such as corn syrup, high-fructose corn syrup, glucose, maltose, and so on; artificial sweeteners such as aspartame, saccharin, and sucralose; sodas and diet sodas; and candies, cakes, and other sweetened baked goods.

Empty foods: Bad fats, processed foods (especially those with artificial additives, preservatives, colors, and flavoring agents), genetically modified foods, caffeine, and sugar, artificial sweeteners or sodas.

How much to eat: None—ever.

Eat Bonus Foods

When I'm working one-on-one with clients, my first objective is to teach them about the basics of eating real whole, good-quality foods, as outlined in this chapter. Once we've determined the basic diet that works for a client, the person usually feels much less anxious. At that point, I introduce the benefits of the bonus foods described next: organ meats, fermented foods, broths, herbs, sprouted beans and seeds, raw apple cider vinegar, sea vegetables, and miso. If any of them appeal to you, feel free to go ahead and include them in your diet. Regarding the others, just keep them in mind for later.

Organ meats. Nutrient dense and very healing, organ meats have been considered a valuable food by many cultures for centuries. Liver is an excellent source of vitamin A, vitamin B_{12}, folic acid, and other B vitamins, and, of course, iron and protein. If you have

unfond memories of beef liver, try chicken or lamb liver, as both have a milder flavor. You can also freeze liver, then grate it and add it to dishes like meat loaf. Other options are liver pâté, beef heart, or kidneys. If you're willing to include organ meats, try to eat at least one serving (3-4 ounces) weekly as one of your protein servings.

Fermented foods. Another traditional food with a long and venerable history, fermented foods contain enzymes and probiotics, which help maintain a healthy balance of flora in the gut, supporting digestive health. Some fermented foods are familiar, like yogurt and sauerkraut. Others may seem a bit more exotic, like kefir (including water kefir), kimchi (an Asian pickled vegetable dish), and kombucha (fermented tea). Because of the enormous health benefits of probiotics, more fermented foods are becoming available. You might look for fermented salsa or salad dressings in the refrigerated section of natural food stores, or make your own. Most of these foods are typically eaten in small amounts, like condiments. It's great to include them in your daily diet.

Broths. Homemade bone broths and vegetable broths are incredibly nourishing and rich in minerals. They improve digestion, are very healing for the digestive system, and help boost immunity. Making a bone broth is easy: Fill a large soup pot three-quarters full, then add the bones from a whole chicken (or use beef bones) and 2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar to help draw the minerals out of the bones. Cover and cook at a low simmer for eight to ten hours for chicken bones, or sixteen to twenty hours for beef bones. Using a slow cooker is another option. Use the broth in stews and soups or to cook brown rice or other whole grains, or just drink it. Try to consume broths a few times week.

Fresh herbs and spices. These make such a difference in the flavor of meals and add immensely to the pleasure of cooking and eating. They also have many medicinal benefits, such as improving digestion (mint and ginger) and helping prevent cancer (turmeric and rosemary). Use garlic, ginger, parsley, and cilantro liberally. Fresh herbs are best, but dried herbs are also fine. I also advocate including high-quality unrefined salt, such as Celtic sea salt or Himalayan salt, in your diet—up to 1 teaspoon daily. It adds to the flavor of

meals while also providing important trace minerals, aiding digestion, and whetting the appetite.

Sprouted beans and seeds. These are incredibly nutrient dense, a great source of enzymes, and a relatively good source of vegetable protein. It's easy to grow your own sprouts, especially alfalfa, mung beans, lentils, and broccoli. Try them on salads, or add them to stir-fries right at the end of cooking.

Raw apple cider vinegar. A time-honored remedy, apple cider vinegar has a variety of vitamins and minerals, and it promotes good digestion and stable blood sugar levels. You can combine it with olive oil to make a salad dressing, or add 1 tablespoon to an 8-ounce glass of water and just drink it.

Sea vegetables. Rich in minerals, including iodine, iron, and magnesium, sea vegetables may also protect against cancer (Yang et al. 2010). Try adding dulse, kombu, or kelp to soups, stews, and legume dishes. Nori, the seaweed used in sushi, is a great snack and can be used in place of tortillas to make wraps.

Miso. This fermented soybean paste has all the benefits of fermented foods and may also protect against cancer and heart disease (Murooka and Yamshita 2008). This is one of the few soy products that I recommend. And if you don't tolerate soy or need to avoid it for any reason, you can also find miso made from rice, barley, and other beans. Just make sure it's organic and raw. Don't heat miso, as this destroys its beneficial enzymes. The easiest way to get the benefits of miso is to mix 1 tablespoon into a bit of water, then add it to a bowl of soup or stew just before serving.

Summary of Quantities and Combinations to Eat Each Day

Overall, the dietary approach I recommend has you eating proteins, fats, and carbohydrates at each meal and when you're eating snacks. The amounts of protein and fat are moderate. The amount of carbohydrates is somewhat low compared to the typical Western diet.

The amount of carbohydrate is very low if you're following the third diet, so you'll need to eat more protein and fat. The recommendations on quantities of what to eat each day are simply guidelines to help you devise your own optimum antianxiety diet. Please don't get into measuring exact cups of food or counting calories. Just use the amounts to guide you, then adjust based on your experience and unique nutritional needs. Here's an example of what a well-balanced lunch or dinner plate might look like:

- One-quarter of the plate could be a piece of grilled lamb or beef or fish (protein).
- One-quarter of the plate could be a sweet potato (starchy vegetable) with melted butter (some fat), or brown rice (a grain) drizzled with olive oil (some fat).
- Half of the plate could be steamed broccoli, cauliflower, and asparagus (nonstarchy vegetables), also drizzled with butter or olive oil (more fat).

To accompany the meal, you might have a few tablespoons of sauerkraut (a bonus food) and a salad (nonstarchy vegetables and leafy greens) with mung bean sprouts (another bonus food), sliced avocado (more fat), sesame seeds (more fat), and a homemade dressing of olive oil (more fat), apple cider vinegar (another bonus food), and fresh herbs (another bonus food). This could be followed by some fresh or baked fruit, served with coconut milk or fresh cream (some fat).

Recipe and Food Resources

As you begin making changes to your diet, you may need a few new cookbooks and food-related resources to support your antianxiety approach. Here are a few that I recommend to help you get started:

- *The New Whole Foods Encyclopedia* (1999), by Rebecca Wood. This is a great resource for selection and preparation of vegetables, fruits, grains, and herbs.

- *Julia's Kitchen Wisdom* (2009), by Julia Child. This is a great little recipe book that also provides instruction in basic cooking techniques. When you're ready, also try some of her more advanced cookbooks.
- *The Bold Vegetarian: 150 Innovative International Recipes* (1995), by Bharti Kirchner. Vegetarian cookbooks can be a great resource if you're new to cooking vegetables, and this one is no exception.
- *Nourishing Traditions* (2001), by Sally Fallon. This book has recipes for many traditional meat, fish, chicken, and vegetable dishes, as well as information about and recipes for soaked, sprouted, and fermented foods, and much more.
- *Cooking to Heal: Nutrition and Cooking Class for Autism* (2010), by Julie Matthews. This recipe book and four-hour cooking DVD covers gluten-free, dairy-free, and grain-free diets, as well as traditional broths, fermented foods, and more. Julie and I have worked together, and we've found there are many overlaps between dietary approaches for autism and mental health issues, so don't be put off by the title.

With any cookbooks you use, these included, you'll need to modify the recipes to suit your own tastes and dietary needs. Here are a few specific guidelines: Replace canola and other less healthy oils with olive oil, butter, or coconut oil. Replace wheat flour with a gluten-free option. Use wheat-free tamari instead of soy sauce. Replace tofu with red meat, chicken, or fish. And, of course, just pass on any recipes that call for artificial sweeteners, processed or refined ingredients, refined sugar, or excessive amounts of natural sweeteners.

Wrapping Up

This way of eating really isn't difficult. It's more like getting back to the basics. And while any change can be hard at first, especially

changes in what you eat, before you know it you'll feel great and be well on your way to eliminating anxiety. This will provide powerful motivation to stick to the diet that works for you. As a bonus, you're likely to feel enhanced overall health and well-being. Enjoy the journey of discovering the diet that works best for you.

I know this chapter has covered a lot of ground, so here are some quick reference lists to make it easier for you to design your own, personalized antianxiety food solution.

Antianxiety "Yes" Foods

- Real, whole, good-quality food, with plenty of variety
- Good-quality sources of animal protein
- Fish a few times a week
- Good fats
- Organic vegetables and fruits, in all the colors of the rainbow
- Carbohydrates from fruit, vegetables, and grains (as tolerated)
- Protein, carbohydrates, and good fats at each meal and most snacks
- Breakfast every day, with protein
- Three meals and two snacks a day
- Plenty of pure water
- Eating according to your unique biochemical needs

Antianxiety Bonus Foods

- Organ meats
- Fermented foods
- Broths

- Herbs and spices
- Other nutrient-dense foods: whey, sprouts, raw apple cider vinegar, sea vegetables, and miso

Antianxiety "Watch" Foods

- Gluten-containing grains (if tolerated), preferably soaked, sprouted, or fermented
- Dairy products (if tolerated), preferably raw and organic
- Gluten-free grains, legumes, and starchy vegetables

Antianxiety "No" Foods

- Bad fats
- Processed foods, especially those with artificial additives, preservatives, colors, and flavorings
- Coffee and other sources of caffeine
- Sugar, artificial sweeteners, and sodas
- Foods containing genetically modified ingredients