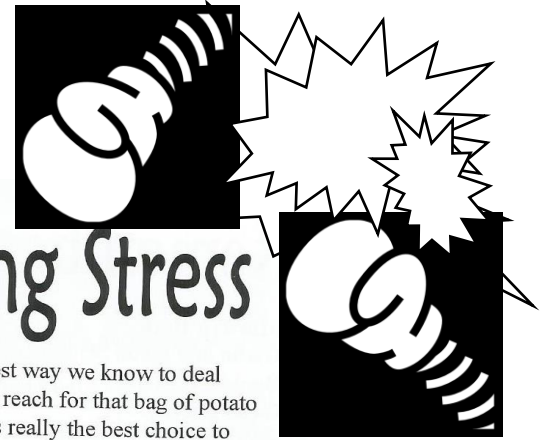


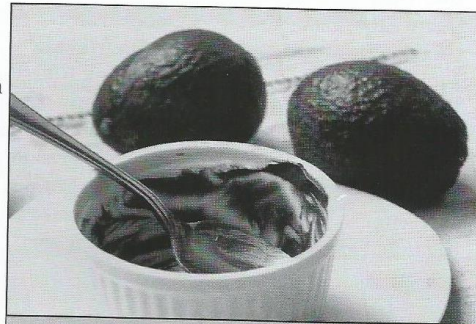
# 8 Super Foods for Fighting Stress



Daily stress seems to be a never ending struggle for many of us. For many of us the best way we know to deal with stress comes in the form of food. We want to relieve the stress quickly and so we reach for that bag of potato chips or dip into that pint of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream. But are our go-to comfort foods really the best choice to help our bodies deal with stress? What if there were better options?

There are plenty of wonderful whole foods that are easy to find, easy to keep on hand and quick to fix! Some require no more thought than placing them into your mouth and chewing. How is that for easy! Here is a list of 10 Super Foods to help fight stress:

1. **Nuts.** Look for raw nuts as they are not roasted in unhealthy oils. Walnuts: 1 oz a day will prevent blood pressure from rising. They are also high in Omega 3 acid which has been shown to help prevent memory loss. Almonds: High in Vitamin B, magnesium and zinc these have been shown to fight free radicals associated with stress and heart disease. Cashews: Good source of zinc. Low levels of zinc are linked to anxiety and depression. Since we have no way to store zinc it is important to get it daily.
2. **Blueberries.** These little fruits are high in antioxidants and counteract the production of cortisol which is a chemical released during stressful times.
3. **Salmon:** Look for wild caught salmon as it contains high amounts of omega 3 fatty acids. Fatty acids can reverse stress symptoms by boosting serotonin and lowering anxiety hormones such as cortisol.
4. **Asparagus:** High in foliate which is essential for keeping your mood stable.
5. **Garlic:** Packed full of antioxidants garlic neutralizes free radicals (particles that damage our cells, cause disease and encourage aging). One compound in particular in garlic is allicin which has been linked to fend off heart disease, cancer and the common cold. Because stress weakens the immune system we need garlic to build us back up.
6. **Cottage Cheese:** High in protein and thus won't cause a spike in blood sugar. Combine  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup with a high vitamin C fruit such as pineapple, mango or oranges and you have a great snack.
7. **Avocados:** These creamy, green fruits stress-proof your body. Rich in glutathione, a substance that blocks intestinal absorption of certain fats that cause oxidative damage. They contain lutein, beta-carotene, vitamin E & B and more foliate than any other fruit! Plus they are extremely versatile and can be made into a meal or a dessert.
8. **Dark Chocolate:** What kind of anti-stress list would this be without the inclusion of Chocolate!! DARK chocolate lowers blood pressure and contains more polyphenols and flavonols (antioxidants) than some fruit juices! Make sure to choose wisely and avoid highly processed chocolates with high fructose corn syrups and preservatives. Instead look for chocolate that has 70% or higher cacao content and few other ingredients.



## AVOCADO PUDDING

- 2 small avocados
- 1/2 c unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/2 t vanilla
- 1/2 c honey or real maple syrup
- 1/3 c milk

*Place all ingredients into a blender or food processor. Process until smooth and creamy. Chill.*