







STRESS LESS and LESS SUGAR Food Swaps Fact Sheet





Food type	Swap this	Kcal	For this	Kcal	Food source Vegetarian in green	Why swap and how these foods affect your mood? Key nutrients in blue
Snack	Two finger chocolate biscuit bar	104 (10.6g sugar)	25g pumpkin seeds 	136 (0.3g sugar)	Nuts (particularly Brazil nuts), seeds, beans, lentils, wholegrains, green leafy vegetables e.g. spinach	<p>Magnesium can help relax muscles and reduce anxiety and plays a role in hormone and energy production.</p> <p>Eating healthy snacks such as fruit, nuts and seeds also keeps blood glucose levels stable and it is important to eat little and often on stressful days to minimise the highs and lows of energy levels.</p> <p>Stress can make some people skip meals and they are more likely to reach for processed or sugary foods when hunger hits.</p>
	Oat flapjack bar (34g)	143 (11.0g sugar)	6 Brazil nuts (30g) 	200 (0.7g sugar)		
	Oat & honey granola bar (30g)	147 (5.6g sugar)	Piece of fruit, e.g. 1 orange or 1 banana or 1 apple or 2 satsumas 	60 (orange) 50 (apple) 40 (2 satsumas) 95 (Banana) Natural sugar only	Fruit and vegetables	<p>Eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables daily to get a variety of vitamins and minerals which are crucial when your body is under stress.</p> <p>Chronic stress can weaken the immune system leaving you more susceptible to infection and disease.</p> <p>The adrenal glands are responsible for the production of stress hormones and stores the highest concentration of vitamin C in the body.</p> <p>Eat plenty of vitamin C rich foods including oranges, tomatoes, peppers, leafy greens, broccoli.</p>

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Alcoholic beverage	Glass of wine (125ml) Beer (500ml)	105 (wine) 220 (beer)	Low alcohol wine (125ml) 0.5% beer (500ml)	36 115	Alcoholic beverages	Long term alcohol use increases the amount of stress in people's lives. Heavy drinking can lead to complications such as addiction and will take a toll on overall health and wellbeing. Search the Drink Free Days app Get medical advice before you stop drinking if you have physical withdrawal symptoms (like shaking, sweating or feeling anxious until you have your first drink of the day). It can be dangerous to stop drinking too quickly without proper support.
Breakfast	30g bowl of sugar frosted cornflakes	105kcal & 11.5g sugars	30g bowl of wholegrain cereal, e.g. Bran Flakes or Shreddies or 2 Weetabix 	100kcal, 6g sugar (Bran Flakes); 109kcal, 4g sugar (Shreddies); 136kcal, 1.7g sugar (Weetabix)	Wholegrains, e.g. wholegrain cereals, wholegrain bread, fortified breakfast cereals, brown rice, wholegrain pasta	Sugar increases blood glucose levels but then when they drop down, you may crave another sugar hit to raise the blood glucose levels again. Wholegrain cereals contain thiamin (vitamin B1) which is a co-enzyme helping release energy from carbohydrates. Absorption is inhibited by coffee, black tea and alcohol. Deficiency of thiamin can result in tiredness, feeling depressed or irritability. Wholegrains are also a good source of fibre which slows absorption of sugar, therefore stabilising blood glucose levels. Increases serotonin, which is a messenger chemical in the brain, which improves mood and how we feel. Increases serotonin which is a messenger chemical in the brain, which improves mood and how we feel.

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Breakfast	50g bowl of honey & almond granola	214 11.2g sugar	40g bowl of porridge oats made with water 	152kcal & 0.1g sugar	Wholegrains, e.g. wholegrain cereals, wholegrain bread, wholegrain pasta, oats, vegetables, fruits, peas, beans, pulses, nuts, seeds, potatoes with skin	Sugar increases blood glucose levels but then when they drop down, you may crave another sugar hit to raise the blood glucose levels again. The porridge oats are a good source of fibre which slows absorption of sugar, therefore stabilising blood glucose levels. Increases serotonin, which is a messenger chemical in the brain, which improves mood and how we feel.
Lunch	200g tinned spaghetti on two slices of white toast	124 7.3g sugar (spaghetti) 192k 2.0g sugar (toast)	1/2 tin (60g) of sardines in tomato sauce or 1/2 can (106g) salmon on two slices of wholegrain toast 	105k 0.5g sugar (sardines) 169 0g sugar (salmon) 186 2.4g sugar (toast)	Omega 3 and 6 in oily fish, nuts, seeds; Thiamin in wholegrains	Essential fatty acids (omegas 3 and 6) help moderate the effects of psychological and physical stress. These fatty acids lower the release of glucocorticoids (hormones released by the adrenal glands) under stressful situations. The wholegrain bread contains thiamin (vitamin B1) which is a co-enzyme helping release energy from carbohydrates. Absorption is inhibited by coffee, black tea and alcohol. Deficiency of thiamin can result in tiredness, feeling depressed or irritability. Wholegrains are also a good source of fibre which slows absorption of sugar, therefore stabilising blood glucose levels. Increases serotonin, which is a messenger chemical in the brain, which improves mood and how we feel.

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Desserts	125g pot of jelly	70kcal, 16g sugar	115g pot of sugar-free jelly	5 <0.1g sugar	Added sugar	Sugar and sugar containing foods and drinks will provide a short burst of energy and temporary relief from stressful feelings, but this is quickly followed by a 'low' energy period when your blood sugar levels drop, leading to irritability and increased food cravings.
	60g pot of chocolate mousse	105kcal, 13g sugar	80g handful of strawberries 	30k 4g natural sugar		
Condiments	15g tomato ketchup	15kcal, 3.4g sugar	15g no added sugar tomato ketchup 	6.8kcal, 0.7g sugar	Sugar	Sugar and sugar containing foods and drinks will provide a short burst of energy and temporary relief from stressful feelings, but this is quickly followed by a 'low' energy period when your blood sugar levels drop, leading to irritability and increased food cravings.
Drinks	Can of coke (330ml); Monster Energy (440ml) Caffeinated tea without milk (250ml)	139kcal, 35g sugar, 32mg caffeine 208kcal, 48g sugar, 149mg caffeine 2kcal, 0g sugar, 63mg caffeine	Diet coke caffeine free (330ml) Water Decaffeinated tea without milk (250ml) Decaffeinated instant coffee without milk (250ml)	1kcal, 0g sugar, 0mg caffeine 0kcal, 0g sugar, 0mg caffeine 2kcal, 0g sugar, 4mg caffeine 4kcal, 0g sugar, 2mg caffeine	Caffeinated beverages, e.g. caffeinated tea, coffee, carbonated drinks e.g. colas, "energy drinks" e.g. Monster or Red Bull	Caffeine acts as a stimulant, causing the adrenal glands to release more hormones - such as cortisol - which are already high in our bodies when we are stressed.

	Caffeinated instant coffee without milk (250ml)	4kcal, 0g sugar, 79mg caffeine	Chamomile tea	4kcal		
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