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NUTRITION AND WELLBEING



STRESS PROOF YOUR LIFE

Simple strategies and meal ideas to feel energised,
happier and cope with busy life.

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Hello and welcome!



Thank you for signing up to receive my complimentary eBook which is aimed at supporting people with busy lives to help them feel energised, happier and cope better with stress.

Stress is undoubtedly one of the biggest influences on our health, trust me I've been there. We can often feel like we've got a lot on our plate, juggling family, work, appointments and have a constantly growing to do list, often putting ourselves at the bottom. I also think the pandemic has taught us a lot about stress and how much it can affect our mental and physical health. My own experience of dealing with stress gives me the ability to understand and empathise with anyone in the same situation. It is what motivates me to offer support and positive solutions for those who want to transform their health and feel their best.

Do you feel tired? Overwhelmed? Do you suffer from low mood and a lack of motivation at times? Do you have digestive issues? If you experience any of these then this eBook will be a great starting point for you and I hope some of the recommendations make a real difference to how you are feeling.

Joanne

Stress 101



WHAT IS STRESS?

Stress is a normal reaction that we will all experience in our lives. It is a vital physiological process the body has – it helps us to survive by making sure we can face any potential danger. It's an evolutionary response to help us run away from a wild animal or stay and fight if we were being attacked by an enemy, hence the name for our stress mode: 'fight or flight'. Stress is usually thought of in a negative way but as well as being our built-in survival mechanism, there are other benefits to stress: it helps us meet daily challenges and achieve goals, it can even make us complete tasks more effectively giving us more focus and motivation. The issue arises because modern day life is hectic and the stressors we face can be constant. This type of stress is known as chronic stress. It is this type of stress we don't want in large amounts as it can have a detrimental effect on our health and wellbeing. Stress isn't all bad - it's just about balance. We need our stress response but in small amounts and infrequently, we don't want it switched on all the time.

Stressors are what switch on our stress response. They can be anything that you think will do you harm, think of all the senses - what you can see, hear, feel, smell. They also don't have to be real, they can be perceived, what we can imagine could be a threat. Stressors can be physical: trauma from injury or infection, illness, dietary stress like nutritional deficiencies, lack of calories because of long term dieting or an unhealthy diet, pollution, allergies, dehydration, hormonal imbalances. They can be also be psychological stressors, thoughts and feelings that pop into our heads and create emotions like fear, sadness, anger, frustration, guilt, jealousy. Basically, any negative thoughts or emotions about yourself, others or situations.

Stressors will affect people differently. For one person, an event could happen that may cause very little stress, however another person may experience high stress levels over exactly the same thing. The impact that stress can have can be very individualised. Don't underestimate what can cause stress and the power that daily struggles or hecticness can have on our bodies. Stress doesn't just have to be one big, tragic event, it can be the small things that happen frequently that can be just as detrimental. It is these that cause our stress response to be constantly switched on which means we are constantly in fight or flight mode therefore increasing the demand on our adrenals for cortisol.

Stress 101

THE STRESS RESPONSE: WHAT HAPPENS WITHIN OUR BODIES?

Our stress response leads to a set of physiological changes in the body that switches us from 'rest and digest' mode (the opposite part of the nervous system that keeps us in balance, calming and restoring the body) to 'fight or flight'.

- there's an increase in glucose to give us the energy to fight or run
- our pupils dilate and we become hyper alert
- our blood pressure increases
- our immune system switches on
- the processes we don't need to survive like digestion and reproduction switch off



It is important to know that it doesn't matter what the stressor is, a traumatic event or feeling worried about something – there is only one response, our bodies don't differentiate. These changes occur everytime we are in stress mode.

HOW STRESSED ARE YOU?

Try this quick quiz - if you answer yes to five or more of the questions below it can be an indication that you are stressed. The higher the score the higher chance that stress will be negatively affecting your health.

1. Is your energy less than what you want it to be?
2. Do you feel guilty when you are relaxing?
3. Do you have a persistent need for achievement?
4. Are you unclear about your goals in life?
5. Are you especially competitive?
6. Do you work harder than most people?
7. Do you become irritated / angry easily?
8. Do challenging situations trigger anxiety or panic?
9. Do you often try to do two or three tasks simultaneously?
10. Do you find it hard to relax or switch off?
11. Do you avoid exercise because you feel too tired?
12. Do you get impatient if people or situations hold you up?
13. Do you have difficulty getting to sleep, or staying asleep?
14. Do you wake up feeling tired?
15. Do you rely on stimulants like coffee, energy drinks or sugar to keep going?

Stress 101

WHAT ARE THE IMPACTS OF STRESS?

Stress can affect every single process in our body and can be a contributing factor to many health issues and diseases. Typical symptoms of not coping with stress include: low energy, low mood, anxiety, brain fog, lack of motivation, digestive issues, weight gain, headaches, cravings, low sex drive, PMS, changes in menstrual cycle and being more prone to infections and colds (just to name a few).

Here is a summary of some of the impacts it has on our bodies and health:

- Low energy? Cravings? Poor sleep? Low mood? This could be because stress causes our blood sugar to become unstable, creating a 'blood sugar roller-coaster' where it rises and falls too quickly. This is because the release of cortisol results in an increase in blood sugar as part of our 'fight or flight' response. Also, if we eat high sugar meals that are low in protein and fibre this can make symptoms worse and we can spend all day feeling tired and low.
- Chronic stress over a long period of time not only leads to constantly higher blood sugar but elevated insulin levels. This can cause insulin resistance, where our bodies don't respond to the insulin effectively and can't get glucose into cells. As you can imagine, this hugely impacts our energy levels, causing us to feel tired and triggering us to eat high sugar snacks to give an energy boost which only makes the situation worse.
- Stress is a key player in weight gain – not only because of blood sugar imbalances but it can make it easier for us to overeat and reach for the high sugar / fat foods for comfort and to numb difficult feelings.
- Stress plays a major role in many digestive problems and symptoms can include bloating, indigestion, gas, acid reflux, constipation and diarrhoea. Imagine you eat a meal while reading emails, you read one that particularly annoys or upsets you - your stress response occurs, digestion switches off and your food ends up sitting in your stomach and because digestion has stopped, the food doesn't get broken down properly causing indigestion, gas and bloating.





- Chronic stress can also alter our levels of beneficial bacteria in our gut that play a huge role in not just our gut health but overall health. They are often a forgotten player in our immune system as they can protect us against less desirable, disease promoting bacteria and viruses.
- Too much stress, especially over a long period means our bodies have less ability to make other hormones, for example our sex hormones like progesterone and oestrogen. This can lead to female hormone issues like PMS, PCOS and even driving more severe menopause symptoms.
- Our thyroid hormones can also be affected as high stress levels impact the amount and type made by the body. Our thyroid controls our metabolism and therefore every process in the body, so if our bodies make inadequate levels of thyroid hormones then we slow down and it can cause symptoms of low mood, constipation and weight gain.
- Stress can affect how our brains functions by altering the levels of neurotransmitters in our brain e.g. dopamine and serotonin which can lead to depression, anxiety, difficulty concentrating and brain fog.
- Ongoing stress can impact our immune system by causing it to shift out of balance and drive inflammation. For some people who have specific autoimmune or inflammatory conditions stress can make these worse.

Simple Stress Proof Strategies

These strategies include both nutrition and lifestyle suggestions that you can incorporate into your life to reduce your stress response and take some pressure off your adrenals. These simple recommendations can help you feel more energised, happier, calmer and more in control. Focus on one at a time and personalise them to fit into your lifestyle. The suggested 3-day meal plan will give you some ideas of how to structure your meals and include many of the nutrition strategies below.

1. PROTEIN POWER

Making sure we have adequate protein in our meals and snacks keeps our blood sugar (and energy) stable because if it's too high or too low this puts pressure on our adrenals to produce cortisol - so keeping our blood sugar stable is vital to manage stress. The amino acids in protein are also vital to make hormones and the neurotransmitters which our nervous system and brain need to function properly and cope with stress.

Protein foods to include: meat, fish, seafood, eggs, yoghurt, cheese, tofu, nuts, seeds, beans, lentils, quinoa. You can also use protein powder e.g. whey, vegan or collagen peptides and add it to smoothies or yoghurt.

2. GET YOUR CARBS RIGHT

Carbohydrates are not the enemy, it's just important to get the right amount and type. Eating high sugar carbs can cause your blood sugar to spike which in turn puts pressure on your adrenals and increases cortisol. Keeping your blood sugar stable can reduce cravings, improve energy, sleep and mood and also help balance hormones.

So, reduce or remove ultra-processed, white, high sugar carbs and instead include whole grain carbohydrates e.g. oats, buckwheat, quinoa, basmati rice, wholegrain rice and also fruit and vegetables. Keep sugary snacks for occasional treats.

3. HEALTHY FATS

Include healthy, anti-inflammatory fats in the diet. Stress is inflammatory, so can overwork our immune system and use up lots of energy therefore including omega three fats which have anti-inflammatory properties can help reduce inflammation. Therefore, this reduces a source of stress and can reduce fatigue. Healthy fats include oily fish (salmon, mackerel, anchovies, sardines, herrings), nuts, seeds, olive oil and avocados.

4. DON'T GO TOO LONG BETWEEN MEALS

If you are stressed and are going too long between meals, it can cause your blood sugar to drop too low. This triggers our body to increase cortisol and puts more pressure on our adrenals. This doesn't mean you have to constantly snack all the time but listen to your body - if you are feeling irritated, dizzy, tired, have a balanced snack (see the ideas at the end of the eBook)

Simple Stress Proof Strategies

5. EAT A RAINBOW

Include a variety of different coloured plant-based foods. They provide the key nutrients and antioxidants our body needs to function properly and cope with stressors. They also contain plant compounds called polyphenols which our gut bacteria love and create an environment in which they will thrive. Stress can often reduce our beneficial bacteria which play an important role in not just our digestive health but overall health.

Think about your starting point - you might eat ten different fruits and vegetables each week, but eat the same ones. Choose a different type of fruit, vegetable, seed or nut (or any plant-based food) you don't usually have or maybe haven't tried before. The challenge is to aim for up to 30 different kinds per week covering all the colours of the rainbow. Gradually work up to this, adding a different one each week which can lead to a much more diverse diet over a few months.

There's a useful resource to download on my website to help you increase your plant diversity.

6. INCLUDE STRESS BUSTING SUPERFOODS

There are certain micronutrients which not only support our adrenals but can also be depleted when we are stressed. Below are some stress superfoods to include in your meals which contain these key micronutrients:

Vitamin C - peppers, strawberries, citrus, tomatoes, green leafy veg, broccoli, cauliflower.

B vitamins - meat, seafood, salmon, liver, eggs, whole grains, almonds, lentils, green leafy veg.

Magnesium - brown rice, nuts, seeds, avocados, almonds, bananas, dark chocolate, green leafy veg.

Zinc - meat, fish, shellfish, tofu, lentils, seeds, nuts, eggs, potatoes, oats, dark chocolate.

Simple Stress Proof Strategies

7. KEEP HYDRATED

Not hydrating our bodies optimally can be a stress, something we overlook and can add to our stress load. This simple recommendation can not only reduce stress but also bring about so many more health benefits like improving energy levels. Individual water needs will vary for individuals depending on overall health, activity levels and where you live. The average man needs between 1.2 – 3 litres per day, whereas the average woman needs between 1.2 and 2.2 litres. This works out around 6 – 8 glasses which is a reasonable goal for most. We also get water from our food with fresh fruit and vegetables containing the most. How you drink your water can also make a difference – your body retains more water by drinking little and often rather than having it in one go.

This is such a simple recommendation but often one that people find difficult to do. Here are some simple ways to keep hydrated:

- Take water with you and always have it at hand. If its accessible then you are more likely to drink it.
- Use a bottle/container that is large enough but also easy to drink out of, choose a style that suits you. Water trackers even have helpful time reminders to prompt you when to drink.
- Have a glass of water by your bed to drink on waking, starting your hydration first thing.
- Increase foods with a higher water content like fruit and vegetables.
- Flavour your water to make it more enjoyable so you are inclined to drink more - add slices of lemon, lime, orange, cucumber, mint, berries.
- Link having a drink with something to help remind you which acts like a trigger – for example having a drink of water before your morning coffee(keep a glass next to the kettle), with each meal and snack.

8. SUPPORT YOUR GUT

Our digestion often suffers due to stress as it switches off when we are in 'fight or flight mode'. Here are a few simple basic we can do to support it.

- Eat without distraction, away from work emails, social media, TV - enjoying our food, eating slowly and chewing thoroughly. It sounds simple but it can really help reduce symptoms of bloating, indigestion and reflux.
- Include probiotic rich foods into your diet - kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, live yoghurt, raw cheese, apple cider vinegar.
- Bitter leaves can stimulate digestion e.g. rocket, watercress, chicory, spinach. Have these with your meal in a side salad dressed with olive oil and apple cider vinegar.
- Eat a variety of plant-based foods which can help your gut bacteria thrive.

Simple Stress Proof Strategies

9. GET ACTIVE AND EXERCISE REGULARLY

There are so many benefits of regular exercise but in terms of stress management it helps balance blood sugar which is essential to help manage our cortisol levels. It also promotes weight loss (if that's your goal) and helps improve our mood which often suffers when we are stressed. The secret to including regular exercise into your lifestyle is to do something that you enjoy. If you are particularly feeling the effects of stress then choose more 'adrenal friendly exercise' that you enjoy – nothing too excessive or intense which will add to your stress load. Some examples include Pilates, yoga, weightlifting, swimming, cycling and walking. It could be a simple strategy like setting a daily step target like 10,000 per day using an app on your phone or an activity tracker like a Fitbit. You could also join a local class to make exercise fun and improve motivation.

10. TECHNOLOGY DOWNTIME

Switch off from technology, have time away from the phone or a break from social media. What's your current screen time? You might get a shock when you have a look at how many hours you are on your phone each day (found in settings in case you don't know). Yes, our phones make life easier, we use apps, and we can communicate anywhere anytime at the click of a button but setting some 'no phone time' aside can make a big difference to stress levels for many people.

11. TIME FOR YOU

It is really important that you choose something that YOU want to do. It needs to be an activity that can help you switch off, something you will enjoy and help you to relax. Here are some ideas below, some might not be your cup of tea, they are just suggestions of things you might like.

- Having a relaxing bath before bed (with no kids or interruptions).
- Sitting down to read a good novel with a cuppa.
- Going for a relaxing walk somewhere green.
- Listening to a podcast or audio book.
- Creative or practical activities like knitting, making a photo scrapbook, painting or DIY project.
- Being outside with nature and gardening.

Simple Stress Proof Strategies

12. MINDFULNESS

Practising mindfulness through meditation or simple breathing exercises (which can be as little as five mins per day) can make a huge impact. It puts us into that 'rest and digest' mode and is such a simple way to manage stress. There are many accessible meditation and breathing apps to get you started (I love Calm). Yes, this is using technology but it's about using it in a way that we benefit from, not scrolling constantly through social media.

13. GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

Sleep is a powerful stress reducer; a regular sleep routine restores the body and also helps improve energy levels and reduces cravings.

- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine - bath, music, meditation, reading – whatever relaxes you.
- Make your bedroom dark, quiet and relaxing. Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature.
- Turn off electronic devices at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Activate your blue light filter on your phone called night shift (found in settings) on an evening.
- Avoid consuming caffeine in the late afternoon or evening.
- Avoid consuming alcohol before bedtime.
- Try a night time / herbal tea blend e.g. Pukka night time blend.
- Sleep stories or sleep meditation – there are many apps with sleep stories or meditations to try e.g. Calm.

Simple Stress Proof Strategies

14. CONNECT WITH OTHERS

Connections with people help us feel supported and have a sense of community. Be sociable, meet up with friends and family, join a group or club, chat online or pick up the phone and call a friend. These activities promote feelings of safety and belonging, they give us a sense of connectedness which is an important aspect of managing stress. Social support is linked with the hormone oxytocin which can reduce anxiety levels and activate the rest and digestion part of our nervous system.

15. SELF COMPASSION

Having more self-compassion can help reduce the stress in our lives. We are often our own worst critics and simply being kinder to ourselves can be a powerful first step to having more calm in our busy lives. Self-compassion is being kind and understanding with ourselves when we feel like we are failing at something or feel inadequate. It is recognising that not being perfect and finding something difficult is normal and part of life. Self-compassion is linked to better emotional health. It is being mindful of our thoughts in a non-judgmental way.

A great website to find and more and which has some useful self-guided practices and resources: <https://self-compassion.org/>





Meal Suggestions and Example 3 Day Meal Plan



This example meal plan is a guide to give you an idea of how a few days of balanced eating might look, you can mix and match between suggestions and alter them to your food preferences.

The meals follow the nutrition strategies in the previous section: they contain protein, wholegrains, healthy fats, fibre and a variety of fruit and vegetables, as well as being nutrient dense full of the stress supporting nutrients.

When changing your nutrition, its often a good idea to start with one meal first e.g. breakfast, rather than doing everything at once which can be often overwhelming and an added stress and therefore often difficult to stick to.

There are no complicated recipes, just no fuss, flexible meals that are tasty, quick to make and can be adapted to your food preferences and any dietary requirements. Ingredients are also flexible as you can make lots of different swaps to match what ingredients you have in your cupboards, fridge or freezer.

	No Fuss Breakfasts	On the go Lunches	Quick Dinners
Day 1	Pick and mix breakfast bowl	Bento Box	Simple Salmon
Day 2	Overnight Chia Oat Jars	Mexican Style Rice Bowl	Asian Style Noodles
Day 3	Breakfast Bagel	Pitta pockets	Mediterranean Style Traybake

No Fuss Breakfasts

PICK AND MIX BREAKFAST BOWL

An easy, throw together breakfast which includes a range of different ingredients and all the elements of a balanced meal: protein, carbohydrates, fibre and healthy fats. It's also a great option to put into a container and take to work.

WHAT YOU NEED

Any of the following ingredients: plain/natural/Greek yoghurt, chopped fruit or berries (fresh or frozen), a selection of seeds e.g. ground flax, chia, sunflower, pumpkin, chopped nuts or nut butter, a drizzle of honey, cinnamon, oats, granola (shop bought for quickness).

QUICK METHOD

Simply place all the ingredients in a bowl, sprinkle with some cinnamon, drizzle with honey and enjoy. It can easily be made the night before if you are short of time in the mornings.

PERSONALISE

Use plant-based yoghurt e.g. coconut, oat and maple syrup for vegan. You can make any combination so its easy to put together with any ingredients you have in your cupboards or fridge.



BREAKFAST BAGEL

Fill or top your bagel with any of the following...

- Nut butter banana and cinnamon.
- Ricotta, cinnamon and sliced strawberries.
- Bacon, tomato and avocado.
- Smoked salmon, cream cheese, rocket and capers.
- Bacon, mushroom and spinach.
- Scrambled egg, cherry tomatoes and grated cheese.

PERSONALISE

Easy to make gluten free and vegan or vegetarian.



No Fuss Breakfasts

OVERNIGHT CHIA OAT JARS

An easy, throw together breakfast which includes a range of different ingredients and all the elements of a balanced meal: protein, carbohydrates, fibre and healthy fats. It's also a great option to put into a container and take to work.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 40g oats
- 2 tbsp chia seeds
- 150ml oat milk
- 1 tsp honey or maple syrup
- 50g berries, cherries or chopped fruit (fresh or frozen)

OPTIONAL EXTRAS

- 1 tbsp plain yoghurt (makes it creamier)
- 2 tbsp collagen peptides (supports gut health and increases protein)
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp. cocoa powder

QUICK METHOD

Mix all the ingredients together in a jar or tub (you can mix the fruit or berries through now or place on top when ready to eat) and leave in the fridge overnight.

PERSONALISE

For dairy free use dairy free yoghurt, add 1 tbsp of cocoa powder for a chocolate version, any type of fruit or berries can be used. Add some chopped nuts for some extra crunch.



On the Go Lunches

BENTO BOX

Bento is Japanese for convenient, a meal packed in a box so these make an ideal way to put some fridge and store cupboard items together to make a sort of picnic style lunch. For extra ease you can use pre-packaged food like hummus, cheese, yoghurt which you can grab from the fridge along with some veggies.

Grab all sorts of different fridge and store cupboards and ingredients you have and pop into your box - simple. Shop bought mini hummus pots, cheese e.g. cheddar, feta cubes, cottage, a selection of veggies you can chop, olives, oat cakes, crackers, rice cakes, berries, fruit slices, nuts, pots of yoghurt, boiled eggs. So easy to personalise to your food preferences and any intolerances,



MEXICAN STYLE RICE BOWL

This is such an easy, substantial salad that is great to throw into a container and take to work. It's full of flavour and has a huge variety of fibre rich, plant-based ingredients to keep you going through the afternoon. Makes approx. 2 servings.

WHAT YOU NEED

- A bag of microwave rice - wholegrain/basmati, wild mixed grains
- A tin of mixed beans, kidney or black beans
- 1 avocado diced
- 1 tomato diced
- ½ red onion or 2 spring onions (finely diced)
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- A tin of sweetcorn
- 1-2 tbsp red or green jalapenos (from a jar)
- Fresh coriander (chopped)
- Juice of a lime
- Greek yoghurt (to serve with)



On the Go Lunches

QUICK METHOD

Simply place all the ingredients in a bowl, sprinkle with some cinnamon, drizzle with honey and enjoy. It can easily be made the night before if you are short of time in the mornings.

PERSONALISE

Use plant-based yoghurt e.g. coconut, oat and maple syrup for vegan. You can make any combination so its easy to put together with any ingredients you have in your cupboards or fridge.



On the go Lunches

PITTA POCKETS

Pitta breads make a great sandwich alternative - wholewheat pittas are low GI so help keep blood sugar and energy levels stable. Stuff with your favourite ingredients, wrap up and grab from the fridge to take to work or eat when your out.

WHAT YOU NEED

Wholewheat pitta bread (gluten free if needed).

Your favourite salad leaves and veggies.

Antipasto type ingredients (from a jar) - artichokes, roasted peppers, sun dried tomatoes.

Protein source - leftover cooked chicken, tuna, prawns, bacon, hummus, feta, boiled eggs.



EXAMPLES

- Prawn, avocado, salad leaves and a drizzle of mayo.
- BLT - bacon, leftover cooked chicken, avocado, spinach and tomato slices, with a drizzle of mayo.
- Hummus, grated carrot, salad leaves, chopped walnuts.
- Mediterranean pitta - olives, salad leaves, feta, chopped sun dried tomatoes.
- Tuna, mayo, chopped red pepper and red onion, a handful of capers and salad leaves.

PERSONALISE

Another quick lunch idea which is easily adapted to different food preferences and any intolerances. Many people think that bread is the enemy - my advice would be 'everything in balance' and just make sure you have protein and healthy fats with your choice of bread (and make it gluten free if you find this works best for you).



Quick Dinners

SIMPLE SALMON

This is a simple but delicious quick dinner. The salmon is high in protein and full of anti-inflammatory fats. Green leafy veg are full of fibre and contain those nutrients often depleted by stress especially the B vitamins, vitamin C and Magnesium. Serves approximately 2.

WHAT YOU NEED

- 2 salmon fillets.
- A bag microwave rice e.g. basmati, wild rice mix, wholegrain or precooked lentils.
- 1-2 garlic cloves (sliced).
- Chilli flakes (optional).
- 1 tsp olive or coconut oil.
- A selection of green veggies e.g. kale, spinach, leeks, cabbage, broccoli, chard.
- Fresh coriander

QUICK METHOD

Cook the salmon fillets to your liking e.g. pan fry, bake in the oven.
Stir fry the veggies in some olive or coconut oil with some garlic and chili flakes.
Serve with rice (use microwave bag for quickness if short of time).

PERSONALISE

Swap the salmon for chicken, cod loin or steak. To make it vegan use slices of firm tofu.
You can also add a splash of soy sauce and sesame oil to your greens. Any veggies can be used, it's also nice to add mushrooms and frozen peas.



Quick Dinners

MEDITERRANEAN STYLE TRAYBAKE

Nutrient dense, full of protein and packed with fibre which supports digestive health and blood sugar balance to keep energy levels stable. You can also prepare your tray the night before and keep it in the fridge ready for dinner the next day and just pop it in the oven when you get back from work.

The recipe can easily be adapted for any number of people and can be served with favourite protein choice.

WHAT YOU NEED

A selection of veggies e.g. new potatoes (these can be left over pre-cooked ones or raw, cut into smaller pieces if they are quite large), sweet potato or carrot, butternut squash, red onion, peppers, courgette, celeriac, large tomatoes halved or cherry /plum tomatoes, fennel, leeks.

- A protein of your choice: chicken breast fillets or thighs, pork chops, salmon fillets, cod loin or sea bass, beans, halloumi, mozzarella or feta cheese, a can of beans, lentils, chickpeas, chorizo (sliced).
- 1-2 tbsp olive oil.
- 2-3 garlic cloves.
- A choice of Mediterranean style antipasto type ingredients like olives, sundried tomatoes, artichokes.
- Seasoning.
- Fresh herbs (optional but add lovely fresh flavour).



Quick Dinners



QUICK METHOD

Arrange the vegetables of choice and garlic cloves onto a large baking tray and coat in olive oil and season well. It takes roughly between 30-40 minutes to cook at around 180°C depending on your choice of veg (ovens also vary).

Add the olives, chopped sundried tomatoes for the last ten minutes or so along with halloumi, mozzarella or cubes of feta (if you are using them). This is also a good point to add any beans if you are using them as they will only need a short time to heat through. If you are using meat or fish you can either cook them with the veg, placing them on top or cook separately just serving them together.

When serving, top with your favourite, chopped fresh herbs.

PERSONALISE

Any vegetables go with this recipe, it's easy to make vegan or vegetarian and tweak to any ingredients you have in the fridge or cupboards.

You can stir in 1-2 tbsp of pesto or harissa paste if you would like to add more flavour (it's best to do this in the last 10 minutes of cooking).

Quick Dinners

ASIAN STYLE NOODLES

A stir fry is a great option for a quick, balanced dinner. A great way to get a variety of different veggies to add diversity which supports gut health. It is also packed full of fibre and nutrients to support stress.

This serves approximately 2 but the recipe is easy to adapt to cook for more.

WHAT YOU NEED

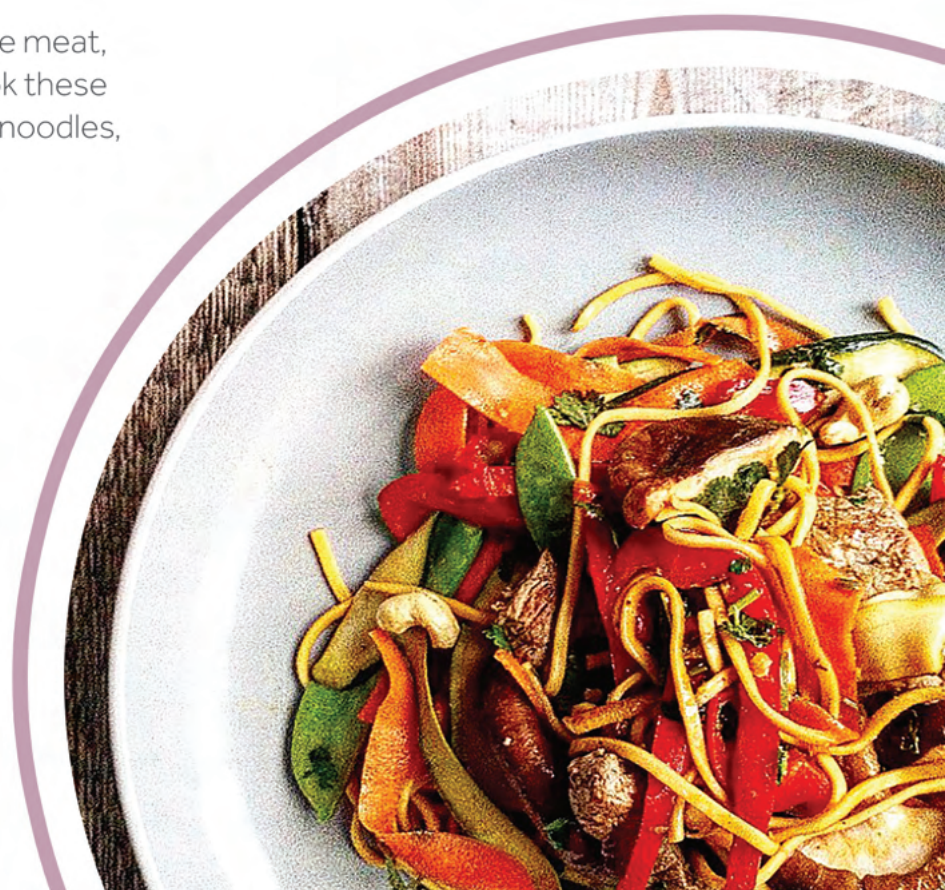
- A selection of vegetables: mushrooms, finely sliced leeks, peppers, carrots, courgette, mange tout, pak choy, spring greens, broccoli, kale, chard.
- Noodles for 2 e.g., rice, egg (follow instructions on packet to cook)
- Protein of your choice - lean steak, chicken, turkey, salmon, prawns, tofu
- 1 tsp coconut or light olive oil
- 1-2 cloves garlic (optional)
- 1 tsp chilli flakes (optional)
- Fresh coriander (chopped)
- For a sauce – 2 tbsp. soy sauce or tamari,
- 1 tsp sesame oil, 1 tbsp. fish sauce, squeeze of lime juice.
- A handful of cashews

QUICK METHOD

In a large pan, heat up the oil, cook the meat, veggies (if using chicken or steak cook these first as they take longer to cook) add noodles, cashews and sauce ingredients.

PERSONALISE

This stir fry is versatile as you can use any protein source you like or have in the fridge or freezer, any veggies and type of noodles. Its also easy to make gluten or dairy free. Peanuts are a good alternative to cashew nuts or alternatively you can add a tbsp of peanut or cashew butter which makes it more satay style.



Stress Busting Snack Ideas

A MIXTURE OF BALANCED, NUTRIENT DENSE SNACKS WHICH ARE EASY TO POP INTO A TUB AND TAKE WITH YOU.

- Raspberries with a few squares of 70% dark chocolate.
- Savoury snack bowl or tub e.g. celery, cubes of cheese, olives and a few nuts.
- Oats cakes with olive tapenade and avocado.
- Oatcakes with cashew butter and strawberries.
- Greek yoghurt bowl topped with your favourite fruit or berries (fresh, frozen or even stewed), nuts, seeds or granola.
- Strawberry Kefir Mess – a few spoons of kefir yoghurt, 1 tsp vanilla extract, chopped strawberries, a crushed-up rice cake and a drizzle of honey.
- Boiled eggs and cherry tomatoes.
- Hummus with oat cakes and veggie sticks.
- Cottage cheese mixed with chopped fruit and a few nuts e.g. chopped peach and cashews, blueberries and walnuts.
- Rice cakes with nut butter, banana slices, sprinkled with cinnamon.
- Quick chocolate and cherry protein pudding – 3 tbsp Greek yoghurt mixed with 1 tbsp chocolate protein powder, 1 tbsp cocoa powder, ½ tbsp ground flax seeds and some cherries (frozen ones, defrosted).





I hope you enjoyed this eBook and it has given you some useful ideas to help you manage stress in your life. If you would like any further support with managing stress related symptoms or achieving your health goals then get in touch and book a complimentary consultation to find out more about my approach.

