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APRIL 2024

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STRESS: Understanding the Forces That Shape Resilience

The Impact of Dehydration on High Blood Sugar

Strengthening Immunity with Delicious Recipes

7 Top Plant-Based Protein Sources

Home Cures That Work

If there is one thing the past couple of years has taught us, it's the importance of maintaining a strong immune system. But really, supporting your immune system shouldn't be something you only pay attention to during cold and flu season. We should be working on building up a strong immune system all year round through our daily habits and routines. Home Cures That Work offers an explanation of how to build balanced, nutritious, and tasty meals to set yourself up for a lifetime of immune health.

We all know that consuming enough protein is vital for our health. But when it comes to protein choices, we may not always have to seek out the meat department. Whether it be for health, the environment, animal welfare, or otherwise, there's no shortage of reasons why more and more people are opting for plant-based protein sources. You'll find a list of the best plant-based protein sources in this month's issue.

A healthy body also needs water and salts in order to work properly. Dehydration happens when the body loses more water than it takes in during the day, resulting in low fluid levels. Managing dehydration can be a particular problem for people living with high blood sugar. In this month's issue, we will discuss why prioritizing hydration is essential for individuals with type 2 diabetes to achieve better blood sugar control and overall health.

Dr. Scott Saunders stresses the importance of resilience in navigating all of life challenges. He discusses the significance of a firm foundation and the role of control in managing distress and eustress. The doc advocates for embracing stress as an opportunity for growth! You CAN manage stress effectively.. … especially with proactive choices and a positive outlook!

For your health,

Cheryl Ravey,
Editor, Home Cures That Work

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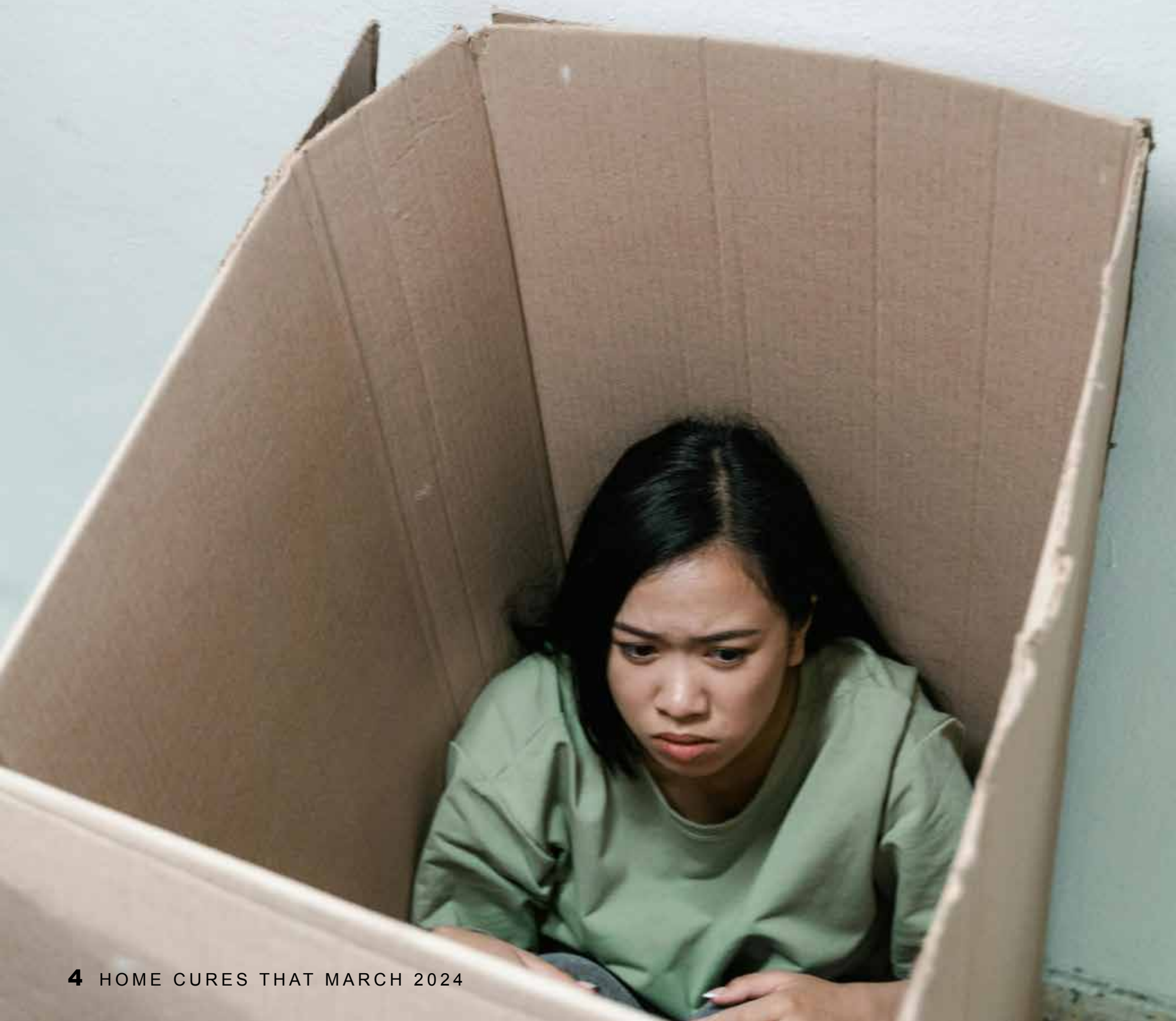
STRESS: UNDERSTANDING THE FORCES THAT SHAPE RESILIENCE

by Dr. Scott Saunders, M.D.



A SHORT TIME AGO while a passenger jet was climbing at 16,000 feet in the air, part of the side of the airplane blew off and they had to make an emergency landing.[1] The problem was that originally there was a door there, but the door was removed and filled as part of the fuselage. The large area had a lot of pressure. The inside of the cabin is pressurized to about 10 pounds per square inch. For example, the little windows in a passenger jet are about 100 square inches, that's about 1,000 pounds of pressure, half a TON, on each window. That's why they are so small. In the case of the blow-out, the large area was over 5,000 square inches, meaning there would have been up to 25 tons of pressure on that repair. That's a LOT of force. It couldn't take the stress, so it broke out.[2] Those who repaired the hole did not account for the stress involved.

In human terms, the concept is the same: as we have pressure to change, we have stress. The greater the external change, the greater the stress. It is not just the stress itself, but rather the body's response to change that may cause us to break. Resilience is the amount of strength we have to withstand these pressures. Some are very resilient, being able to manage a great deal of stress without breaking, while others are quite fragile, not being able to handle stress. What makes the difference?

Distress

Bad stress, also known as distress, tears us down. Excessive stress can destroy, like the pressure pushing on that repair of the airplane; we can be damaged emotionally and physically by too much stress. Being in a car accident that stresses the bones too much causes fractures and does damage. Too many toxins create stress on the liver and mitochondria that can cause disease or death. Emotional stress can cause people to become depressed and anxious. Infections can overwhelm the immune system and cause permanent damage, or death. Many who have been in the heat of battles have become damaged from the trauma beyond the ability of the mind to heal and move on. It has been called many things, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Gulf-War Syndrome in recent years, but it was also recognized by the Roman armies many centuries ago,[3] by the British in the Napoleonic wars,[4] and after the US Civil War.[5]

Chronic distress often requires intervention of some kind to achieve some measure of healing. It will not be a case of just managing the stress on our own. For example, broken bones often require the expertise of a surgeon to prevent permanent disability. Infections may need antibiotics. Emotional stress may create lasting problems that don't just go away on their own, we may need help to overcome them.

Eustress

The way to become resilient to stress is to stress ourselves. Eustress is the stress we choose to do.

Though we do not always choose it, we can take stress that is given to us and learn from it. Life is naturally stressful, creating cycles of fortune and poverty, feast and famine, that allow us to grow and learn. What may be considered "bad stress" can be turned to "good stress" if we accept it and grow from it.

Physical stress can be very good, in fact, necessary. The astronauts in the International Space Station must take a great deal of time out of their work to stress their muscles with large rubber bands because they don't have gravity to stress them automatically. If they don't, they will have weak muscles and bones. For every week a muscle is not stressed, it will lose 4% of its strength.[6] We likewise require physical stress. If I go to the gym and stress my muscles, I am actually breaking down muscle fibers, and the body will build them up again – stronger. Stress makes us strong. Bones receive strength in the same manner. Many who have osteoporosis believe they can take a drug that kills bone cells and make their bones stronger, when all they really need to do is stress them with weight-bearing exercise such a running, walking, or lifting weights. This is good stress.

Good emotional stress is found, for example, in a family. It's very stressful to be married and have children. It's hard because things over which we have no control change daily. However, as we work through the emotional stressors, and sacrifice what we want for the benefit of others, we grow in love. I believe there is no better way to learn to love than to have and raise a family – because of all the stress it causes.

An understanding that stressful situations can be a time of growth is a good way to turn potential distress into eustress.

Foundation

Resilience to stress begins with a firm foundation. We all have a foundation that we rest on. It may be our money, home, abilities, job, people, family, friends, and so forth. Ideally, a foundation should be something stable because the loss of our foundation can be devastating. Most never recover – unless they find another foundation on which to build their lives.

For example, we may have a mother who loves us – no matter what! If we make mistakes and end up in jail, we still have that love. But if our mother passes away, we lose that foundation, which may cause anxiety. Or, if my foundation is on my physical abilities, and I have a stroke, it will cause a lot of stress, but if I'm dependent mostly upon my mind, the loss of physical ability will create a smaller amount of stress. For example, even with Lou Gehrig's disease for 50 years, in a wheelchair, without even the ability to speak, Stephen Hawking was able to write books, teach, and use his mind to enlighten the world.[7]

Choose a foundation that is firm and unchanging. This will give you a great deal of resilience. You will be able to withstand a lot more stress if you have a solid foundation.

Control

It is when we have no control over aspects of our life that stress becomes a problem. When scientists want to study stress in animals, they put them in situations where they cannot get relief. Either they are trapped in a tube and cannot move, or they are on an electrified cage and are constantly getting shocked. The animal has no way out and becomes stressed. When we are in control of change, there is little stress.

Change is an inevitable part of life, and therefore stress is natural and normal. Moreover, most of the changes that cause stress are not in our control. Things happen despite all we do to control them. People change, people die, things break down, disasters happen. There will be many times where we feel trapped without a good way out. We cannot control everything, but we can manage our response to these stressful situations. When we take control of our lives we turn distress into eustress.

Avoiding Stress

I was on a roller coaster with my daughter. She was having a lot of fun, but I was stressed. I didn't like it at all! The picture they took of us was telling. She had a huge smile with arms up in the air, and I had white knuckles on the bar in front with a grimace. My only thought was "Somebody stop this crazy thing!" When she wanted to go again, I reluctantly agreed, but half-way through I decided that I would not try to stop it, but rather try to make it go faster – and I enjoyed the ride – it was fun!

Many believe that if they could avoid stress, they would be better-off, but there is no way to avoid it. There are many doctors, therapists, and experts that tell us to avoid stress. I think this is misguided. I have seen that the fear of stress creates even more stress than it prevents. People who are told to rest because they have heart failure are not going to get a stronger heart, it's going to get weaker until they die. A study done on bedrest for illness found that it didn't help.[8] The recommendation from experts about stress may not be in your best interest. The roller coaster is going to do what it does on its track no matter how I feel about it. Stress is everywhere in life. Even lying in a hammock on a beach in Tahiti is going to be stressful at some point, at least when boredom sets in. Life is stressful because many things happen that are outside of our control.

Take Responsibility

A person who is starting their own business often works long hours. They live with constant change and problems. They may work every day for years, and then when they finally have a working business, they retire and have a heart attack.[9]This scenario doesn't always happen, but there is a statistical increase in heart attacks after retirement. People assume that working long hours is stressful, but don't consider that having nothing to do can be more stressful. Having a purpose is a wonderful way to create eustress. When we choose to do something, there is no distress. By being proactive, or choosing to do things, we gain control over our lives, and prevent, or relieve, stress.

- Those things we choose to do to relieve stress include:
- Be responsible for yourself. Control yourself. Don't try to control others.
- Have a plan, a reason, a goal to achieve.
- Live in the present. Focus on what is now, and not the past. Keep an eye on your goal.
- Be flexible. Change when needed.
- Look for what is good about every situation.

Taking responsibility is like "The Serenity Prayer: Lord, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference." This process of growth puts you in control of your life, which lowers stress.

Toxic Stress

We don't often think of food as toxic, but we must consider that a large majority of the toxins in our bodies come from the food we purposely ingest. These toxins stress the body to a great degree, causing illness, fatigue, and aging. Most toxic illnesses are not caused by heavy metals, plastics, or industrial waste, but rather from food. The single most toxic substance in the world is table sugar and natural and artificial sweeteners. Four of the leading causes of death in the United States are either directly or indirectly caused by these toxic substances: heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and dementia.

Eating at night also causes toxicity. When we wake up in the morning the digestive system turns on genes that allow the liver to detox our food. This system goes to sleep in the evening. If we eat at night, toxins are stored in the fat, which stresses the body when the fat is used, and the toxins are released. For example, a common disease called "Fatty Liver Disease" is due to toxic exposure from alcohol, fructose, sweeteners, MSG, and/or eating late.

A good way to avoid this stress and toxicity from food is to have an empty stomach at night. Since the liver must process all the food that is ingested – everything we absorb must go through the liver for processing – it can only detox when there is no food being absorbed. The empty stomach also brings repair of the intestines, so you don't get "leaky gut," which allows toxins to go directly into the bloodstream without being processed by the liver. The stress of fasting is eustress, while the stress of eating causes distress to the body.

The Anabolic Metabolism

Healing can happen despite stress. Rather than avoid stress, we should use the principles of biology to heal physical stress. One thing we are not taught is how to repair all the damage done from our daily stress on our bodies. During the day we have a "catabolic metabolism" which is mediated by the stress hormone cortisol. This is the time that we break down our bodies, get wear-and-tear, and cause aging. There is no way to avoid this because it is how we work and get things done. If you don't get stressed, you cannot grow. So, the key is not to avoid stress, but rather to repair the damage you do in the day, by sleeping every night. During sleep we have our "anabolic metabolism" to repair all the damage done during the day. For example, people don't need knee replacements because they had too much stress, but rather because they didn't repair the damage done. Avoiding catabolic metabolism is impossible, we only need to be anabolic every night to keep our bodies resilient to stress.

There are only two rules to have anabolic metabolism and repair your body every night:

- Go to sleep by 10:00 PM
- With an empty stomach.

That's it. That's how easy it is to repair all the physical stress in life. That is how to stay young and keep your body functioning and avoid the "diseases of aging." Do I need to do this every day? No. Only on the days you want to rebuild, repair, and detox.

Do Hard Things

Since there is no way to avoid stress, the more important thing is to deal with it properly. Those who have strength can withstand stress. Thus, it is important to create your own stress. In the days when work required muscle strength, most people exercised out of necessity. Now, however, there is no need to stress your muscles. We have vehicles to do the work for us. We don't need to walk or run. We don't need to dig holes. We don't need to do anything by hand because we have motors to do the work. Also, computers do the thinking so we can settle for passive entertainment and prevent any mental stress. As we do this, we grow weaker and weaker. People say, "I'm just getting old," but really, they are declining in function because they don't have enough stress. So, we are forced to create our own stress by going to the gym and actively seeking to become stronger.

Having extra capacity helps us to manage stress. We gain capacity by creating stress. It seems ironic that if I want to avoid stress then I need to create stress, but it makes perfect sense. If I need to lift 100 pounds, but I regularly go to the gym and lift 200 pounds, then I don't find that stressful. However, if I never work out and don't have the capacity to lift 100 pounds, then I could hurt myself trying. It is stressful when I can't do what I need to do. We gain resilience in any area by taking on stress and doing hard things.

- It's hard to start a business (especially after you have failed several times).
- It's hard to go to bed every day by 10:00 PM.
- It's hard to wake up every day by 6:00 AM.
- It's hard to have a workout routine and

stick to it.

- It’s hard to fast for 3 days every month.
- It’s hard to take all processed sugars and artificial sweeteners out of your diet.
- It’s hard to love those who don’t love you.
- It’s hard to go to school and get a degree.
- It’s hard to take on the problems of others and truly help them.
- It’s hard to adopt a child or become a child advocate.
- It’s hard to turn off the screens by 9:00 PM.
- It’s hard to keep an eating schedule of 2 meals per day at 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM.
- It’s hard to study every day.
- It’s hard to have faith.

Doing any, or all, of these things will give you resilience. You will have enough to spare. You will have extra energy to help others. You will be able to handle anything life throws at you.

Recap of Stress Reduction:

- Start with a solid foundation on which to base your life.
- Live with a positive outlook, look for the good in everyone and everything.
- Seek help for damage caused by excessive past stresses.
- Be proactive – create stress in your life by improving, growing, and learning.
- Turn bad stress into good stress by seeking growth.
- Be soft and moldable as stress comes.
- Stay in “learning mode” always.
- Let it be, don’t resist stress by trying to stop it.
- Live in the present, with a plan for the future.
- Love someone every day.
- Avoid toxic (processed) food.
- Eat 2 meals per day, 8 AM and 4 PM.
- Sleep every night by 10 PM.

By following these guidelines, you will be strong, and have a great deal of resilience. You will be able to tolerate a great deal of stress. You will not have a “blowout” when the stresses of life put tons of pressure on you!

Reading List for Stress Reduction:

- How to Win Friends and Influence People by Dale Carnegie
- The Slight Edge by Jeff Olson
- The Power of Now by Eckhart Tolle
- Financial Peace University by Dave Ramsey
- The Four-Hour Work Week by Tim Ferris
- The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen Covey
- The Circadian Code by Sachin Panda
- The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin by…
- The Holy Scriptures by…

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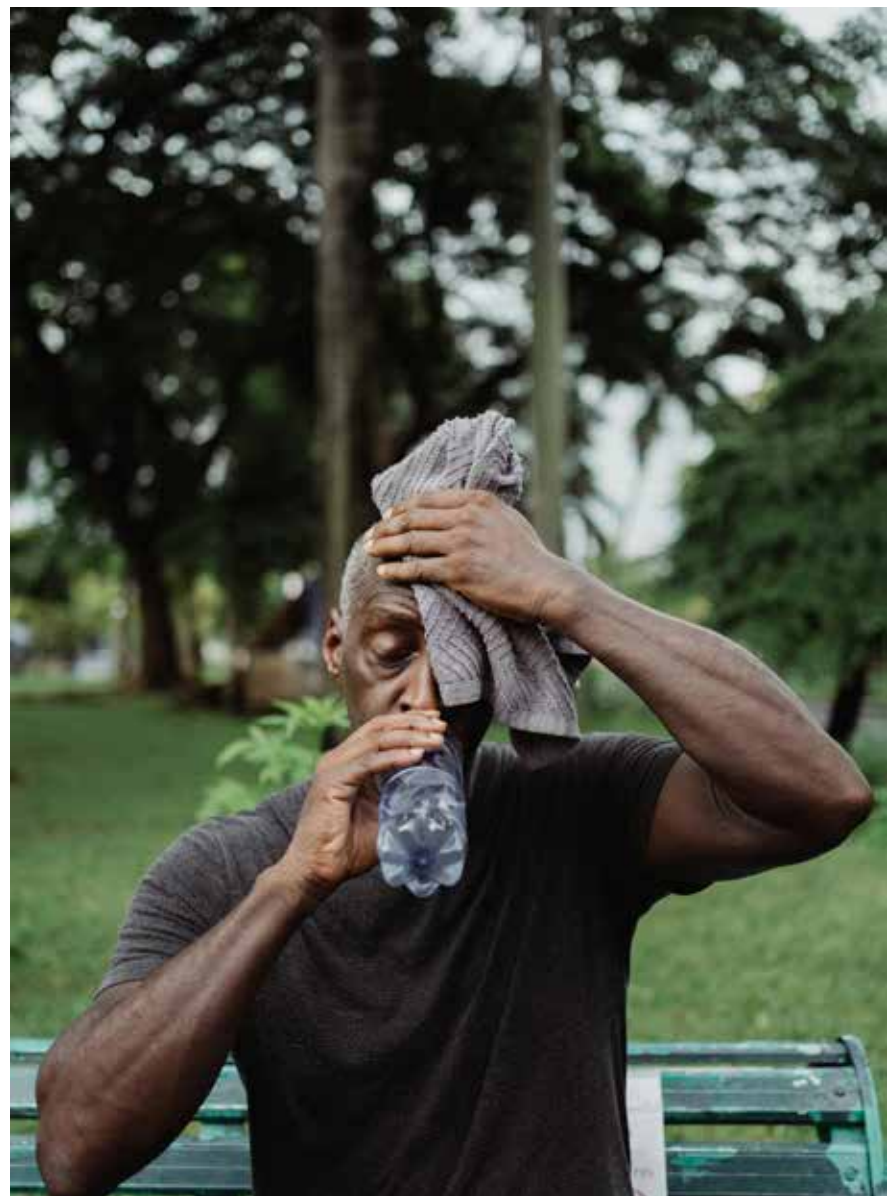
Sources: [1] https://www.msn.com/en-us/travel/news/truly-terrifying-investigators-describe-the-blowout-aboard-an-alaska-airlines-flight/ar-AA1mxzm4 [2] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cabin_pressurization [3] https://researchcentre.army.gov.au/library/land-power-forum/how-did-ancient-warriors-deal-post-traumatic-stress-disorder [4] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1569621/ [5] https://www.civilwarmed.org/ptsd/ [6] https://www.dovepress.com/relationship-between-sarcopenia-and-physical-activity-in-older-people--peer-reviewed-fulltext-article-CIA [7] https://www.nationalgeographic.com/adventure/article/stephen-hawking-dies-black-hole-physics-universe-obituary [8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bed_rest [9] https://hrs.isr.umich.edu/

The Impact of Dehydration on High Blood Sugar



INSUFFICIENT WATER INTAKE can complicate blood sugar control, posing significant risks for individuals managing T2D. Dr. Robert Rizza, an expert from the Mayo Clinic, emphasizes that dehydration not only affects overall organ function but also triggers the release of stress hormones, potentially elevating blood sugar levels. Research indicates that even short-term dehydration can impair glucose response, highlighting the importance of adequate hydration for individuals with high blood sugar.

For those managing T2D, dehydration can be particularly hazardous as it can cause blood pressure to drop and stimulate the secretion of stress hormones, further exacerbating blood sugar levels. Studies have shown that individuals with high blood sugar who experience inadequate water intake may have impaired blood sugar response due to elevated cortisol levels. To mitigate these risks, it's recommended that individuals with high blood sugar adhere to daily water intake guidelines set forth by health authorities.

While more research is needed to fully elucidate the relationship between dehydration and T2D risk, evidence suggests that chronic dehydration may be associated with an increased risk of developing high blood sugar. Scientists hypothesize that dehydration may lead to elevated levels of vasopressin, a hormone that affects kidney function and blood sugar regulation. Despite ongoing research, maintaining adequate hydration remains crucial for managing high blood sugar effectively.

To ensure optimal hydration while managing high blood sugar, experts recommend moderating salt intake, especially for those with high blood pressure, and monitoring blood glucose levels during hot weather. Additionally, incorporating hydrating snacks such as fruits and frozen grapes can help maintain fluid balance. Paying attention to thirst signals and staying well hydrated can significantly contribute to better blood sugar management and overall health for individuals with high blood sugar.

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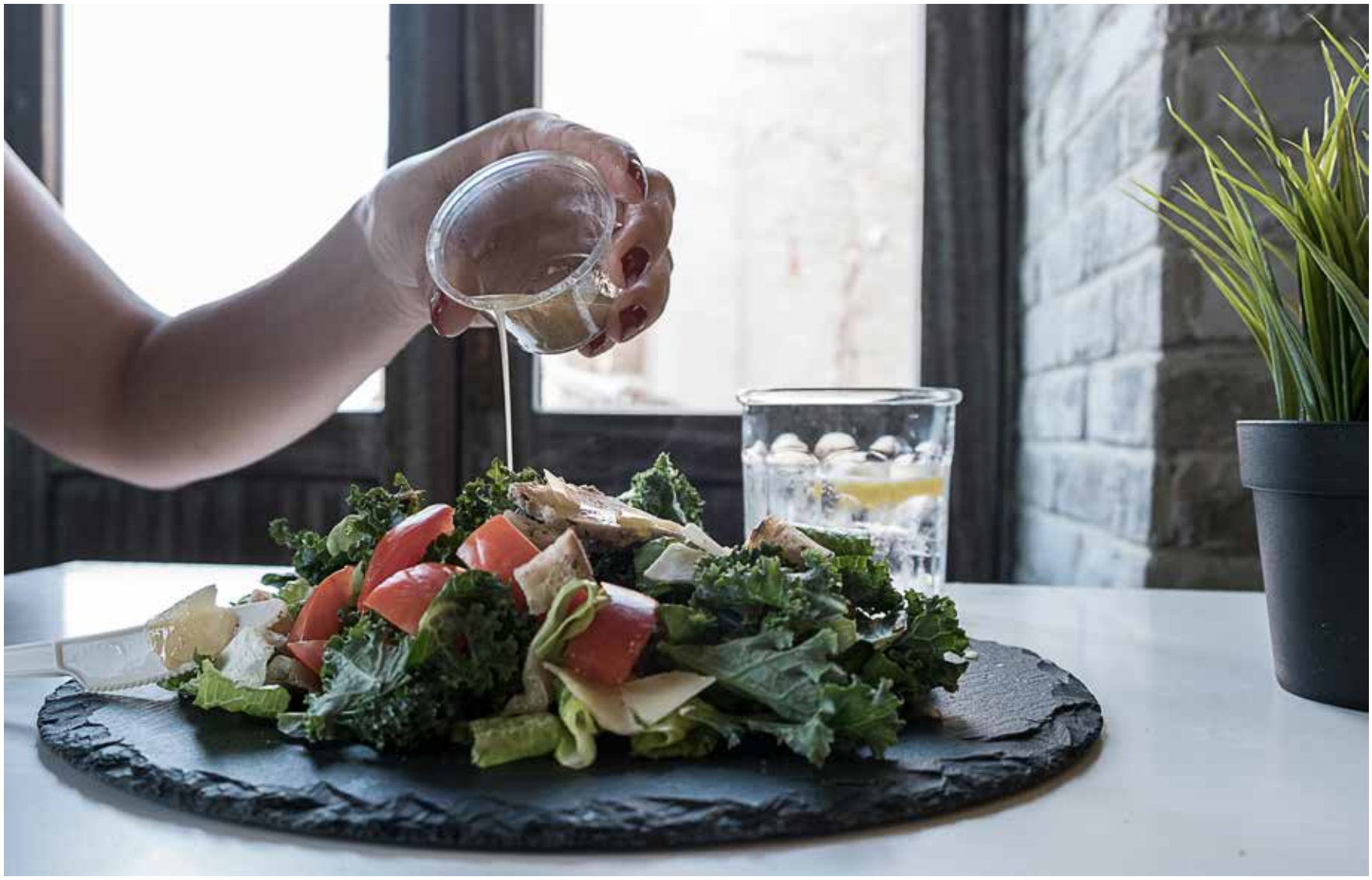
STRENGTHENING IMMUNITY WITH DELICIOUS RECIPES



ENSURING YEAR-ROUND HEALTH becomes imperative, particularly as temperatures drop, leading to increased indoor time and heightened germ exposure. Prioritizing immune-boosting foods and adopting a healthy lifestyle form the cornerstone of wellness.

Wholesome meals abundant in fruits, vegetables, protein, and whole grains offer essential nutrients vital for bolstering the body's immune defenses. Alongside dietary choices, maintaining adequate sleep, regular physical activity, proper hydration, and stress reduction are pivotal for optimal immune function.

Grapes, available in red, green, and black varieties, emerge as a nutritious addition to your grocery list, boasting over 1,600 natural plant compounds, including antioxidants and polyphenols that fortify cell health and immunity. With their high water content, grapes also contribute to hydration, a key factor in supporting a robust immune system.

Incorporate grapes into your diet with delightful recipes like Chicken, Spinach, and Grape Pita sandwiches and Grape and Salmon Power Salad. These dishes blend immune-boosting nutrients such as zinc, vitamins A and C, and polyphenols, ensuring a nourishing meal that promotes overall health.

Chicken, Spinach, and Grape Pita

Servings: 4

- 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons minced shallot
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 pinch red pepper flakes
- 1/4 teaspoon ground sumac
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 package (5-6 ounces) fresh baby spinach, washed and dried
- 1 1/2 cups shredded, cooked chicken (about 8 ounces)
- 1 cup red California grapes, sliced
- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 4 whole-wheat pita bread (6 1/2 inches each), warmed and halved

Instructions:

1. In a small skillet over medium-high heat, toast pine nuts until golden brown, stirring constantly for about 5 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and let cool.
2. In a large bowl, whisk lemon juice, shallot, olive oil, red pepper flakes, sumac, salt, and pepper. Add spinach, chicken, grapes, feta, and pine nuts; toss to combine. Stuff into pita breads and serve.

Grape and Salmon Power Salad

Servings: 6

- 3/4 cup pearled barley
- 3 cups firmly packed kale leaves, torn and sliced into ribbons
- 1 cup halved red or black seedless California grapes
- 8 ounces cold, cooked salmon, skin and bones removed
- 1/2 cup walnuts, lightly toasted and coarsely chopped

Dressing:

- 1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 1 clove garlic, mashed
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Instructions:

1. Cook barley according to package directions. Drain and cool.
2. Tenderize kale by blanching in boiling water for 2-3 seconds or microwaving for 1 minute. Rinse in cold water to stop cooking and squeeze dry. Fluff and uncrimp kale pieces with fingers.
3. In a medium bowl, mix barley, kale, grapes, salmon, and walnuts.
4. To make dressing, whisk lemon juice, garlic, salt, pepper, and cayenne in a small bowl. Gradually mix in olive oil. Pour onto salad and fold gently to combine.

7 TOP PLANT-BASED PROTEIN SOURCES

IN THIS COMPREHENSIVE guide, we explore some of the richest sources of protein found in the plant kingdom.

Diverse dietary choices can offer protein-rich options regardless of meat consumption. Staples like broccoli, spinach, asparagus, and sweet potatoes boast 4 to 5 grams of protein per cooked cup, highlighting the protein diversity in plant-based diets.

1. Pulses

Examples: Beans, lentils, dry peas, chickpeas.

Protein: 14 to 18 grams per cup, cooked.

Pulses like beans, lentils, dry peas, and chickpeas have long been dietary staples globally for their affordability, nutrient density, and versatility. Cooking time can vary, with split peas and lentils requiring less time, making them convenient choices. They also blend well with other ingredients, as in plant-based burgers or high-protein pasta.

2. Soy Foods

Examples: Tofu, tempeh, edamame.

Protein: 14 to 36 grams per cup.

Soy foods provide a complete protein source, containing all nine essential

amino acids alongside beneficial phytonutrients. Tofu and tempeh offer different textures and nutritional profiles, with soy-based substitutes being popular but best consumed occasionally due to processing concerns. Soy's once-debated risks regarding breast cancer have lessened, with studies even suggesting potential protective effects.

3. Whole Grains

Examples: Brown rice, quinoa, millet, teff, wild rice, steel-cut oats.

Protein: 4 to 10 grams per cup, cooked.

Whole grains contribute protein to diets, with quinoa, in particular, offering a complete amino acid profile and ample fiber. Incorporating whole grains into meals, such as using quinoa as a stir-fry base, not only boosts protein intake but also enhances fiber consumption, beneficial for gut health.

4. Nuts and Nutlike Legumes

Examples: Walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, macadamia nuts, pistachios, cashews, pecans, and peanuts.

Protein: 9 to 38 grams per cup Nuts provide a protein-rich snack, with peanut butter or a handful of nuts offering convenient options. Peanuts stand out for their protein content and arginine, beneficial for the immune and circulatory systems. However, varying nut consumption ensures a diverse nutrient intake.

5. Seeds

Examples: Hemp, pumpkin, flax, sunflower, sesame, chia

Protein: 4 to 9 grams per ounce

Seeds offer healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals, with options like chia, hemp, and flax being rich in omega-3 fatty acids. Easily added to meals, seeds enhance nutritional profiles and provide texture to dishes like smoothies or salads.

6. Nutritional Yeast

Protein: 5 grams per tablespoon

Nutritional yeast, with its cheese-like flavor, provides essential amino acids and B vitamins. Commonly used in vegan recipes, it offers versatility as a condiment or flavor enhancer, making it a valuable addition to various dishes.

7. Plant-Protein Powder

Protein: 8 to 42 grams per serving

For those requiring additional protein, plant-based protein powders offer easily digestible options, often containing blends from multiple sources like peas, seeds, and rice. Blended supplements provide a comprehensive amino acid profile, aiding muscle growth and recovery, with third-party testing ensuring quality standards.

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