Introduction to Mood Food and Anxiety

Can food help ease your anxiety or help uplift your mood? You might be wondering who I am. I'm Dr. Uma Naidu, a psychiatrist, chef, and I also teach at Harvard.

What I do is fuse my knowledge of the brain of health and food to help my patients and students. And also a national and international bestselling author, I've published two books all related to mood and foods.

And actually some people call me the mood food expert or moodfood MD which I kind of like because mood and food through this ironic pairing together actually are related.

How so? You might ask. And that's the purpose of this channel. For this video, I will talk about anxiety in food. Back to my question, can food really help your anxiety?

Yes, it can. In my years as a nutritional psychiatrist, as chef, I've met tons of people, not just patients, but people in my professional and personal circle who are extremely anxious.

There was one that I distinctly remember, a nurse who was taking her graduate program. While I was chatting with her, I noticed she was frantically looking for her eyeglasses.

Recognizing Anxiety Symptoms

It was a little funny but also sad at the same time because when I pointed out that her glasses are right in her cold pocket, i saw tears well up in our eyes.

She shared that there was just this anxious feeling looming over her all the time. But despite all of these feelings she, was acing her graduate program and still functioning really well as a nurse.

She's not the only one feeling like this. There are a lot of people out there, and you could be one of them. You might not know that the person you're talking to, your boss at work, or even a friend or family member, even the highest performing person in the office may be suffering from anxiety.

Because anxiety can make you perform so well, but at the same time cause you to crumble when you are alone. Some of my patients, especially those working in these highly stressful jobs, did mention that they felt like their anxiety's a double-edged sword because they can work really well and concentrate, but that anxiety is always there looming over them, being worried that the may make a mistake.

While others have shared the most basic symptom one can notice, a horrible empty pit in your stomach like there's a gaping hole or butterflies in the stomach, new emotion every single time, the urge to pick up your phone to endlessly scroll through social media or messages distracting yourself because there are these endless thoughts flooding your brain.

You become angry as if it's the way to cope and you usually do not feel focused. And lastly, that feeling of impending doom that something terrible is going to happen.

How Food Can Support Mood

So what exactly is anxiety? And have we been using this term so loosely that these days some folks would just toss it around as though everyone feels that way?

Anxiety is a whole lot of things. There are clinical criteria that a doctor or clinician will walk through to help with your diagnosis. But here, what I'm really wanting to teach you about is to identify these emotions in yourself or someone

you love and be able to help them because remember that food is a very powerful tool.

Now you may need a medication, you might need to see a doctor, all of that is really important. Psychotherapy, hugely important, but also what you can do is take the power into your own hands and help your anxiety.

And yes, as your mood food expert, I can assure you that food is a powerful tool to help you feel better. And today, I will share with you the top 7 foods that can help you lower your anxiety and uplift your mood.

You can eat them daily, include them in your week, but add these brain foods in. Let's start with almonds, one of my favorite go-to nuts. Take a tablespoon or two of almonds.

They contain 37% of your daily vitamin E. This vitamin reduces the effects of the imbalance in your cells that can contribute to the symptoms of anxiety.

They are also rich in magnesium and that helps you feel an improved sense of calm. What about avocado, a healthy fat rich folate as well as fiber and helps in uplifting your mood?

About a quarter to a half piece of a small avocado a day is enough to give you a great percent of folate that your body needs because guess what?

Top Foods for Anxiety Relief

A low folade gives you low mood. And what about a leafy green salad? So like the avocado, a leafy green salad also contains folate, and folates helps uplift your mood, but not only that, it also maintains the function of your neurotransmitters.

Neurotransmitters are like your brain's postal service. They help deliver messages from one neuron to another, the faster the transmission, better. What about turmeric, one of my favorite all-time spices?

I drink it every morning as turmeric with a pinch of black pepper relieves symptoms of anxiety and depression while relieving brain fog and increased focus and energy.

A little bit of yogurt can be a great pick-me-up because of being rich in probiotics. Eggs like the green salad are also good for your neurotransmitters and fermented foods like kimchi or even sauerkraut.

Adding in a fermented food into your diet can help your mental well-being. Eating some fermented fruits every day helps to lower inflammation in the gut by adding in new strains of bacteria into the your gut that help lower the inflammation.

Just watch for any added sugars and unhealthy ingredients if you buy any fermented If these things are overwhelming, I suggest adding them a little at a time into your diet, maybe just one food at time.

You can start first with just a handful of almonds, adding that into the diet. If you happen to be allergic to nuts, go with the avocado first. Whichever one it is, try to include these into you diet Take one food at a time and remember that one small change, one consistently done habit will have huge impacts on your gut health and your mental well-being.

I am often asked how food and mood or the brain is related.

Simple Diet Changes and Key Takeaways

You might also be wondering how come food can affect my mood? My stomach and my brain are pretty far away from each other. Well, there's science to that.

And by understanding the relationship between your gut, where your food goes, and your brain, I've created a very

simple PDF that can help you explain this.

Just download the ebook by clicking the link in the description box. There are four key takeaways I'd like you to take note of. The food you eat does affect your health, your emotions, or your mood.

You could be experiencing anxiety but still do great in some aspects of your life or vice versa. Anxiety doesn't have a fixed face. It's different for everyone.

Incorporate a simple change in your diet one food at a time and do not force yourself to change your lifestyle in one go. Lastly, there's help for your anxiety.

If you'd like to know more about the science of your mood and food, click the link in the description below to get my free ebook that will help guide you through improving your mental well-being.