

Falling Together Mix

To Help You Find Balance, Joy, and Renewal

- 1 cup Walnuts (pieces)
- 1 cup Cashews (pieces)
- 1 cup Almonds
- 1/2 cup Sunflower seeds
- 1/2 cup Plantain or banana chips (unsweetened)
- 1/2 cup Coconut flakes (unsweetened)
- 1/2 cup Dark chocolate chips (grain sweetened)



WALNUTS are known to be a rich source of fiber, antioxidants, and unsaturated fatty acids, particularly alpha-linolenic acid. Alpha-linolenic acid is an omega-3 fatty acid, which the researchers say could explain the beneficial effects of adding walnuts and walnut oil to your diet will keep blood pressure lower during stress events.

Walnuts are one of the richest dietary sources of serotonin, a chemical that helps create calm and happiness. Providing new evidence that serotonin may be directly absorbed from food into the body, a recent Spanish study found that those who ate a daily 1-ounce combo of walnuts, hazelnuts, and almonds had more of this feel-good substance than a nut-free group.

Nuts and seeds, especially walnuts and flax, are loaded with alpha-linolenic acid (ALA). In research from the Nurses' Health Study, women who had the most ALA in their diets were less likely to be depressed. Here's how it works: When your blood levels of ALA are low, so are you; low ALA levels fan the flames of inflammation, which has been linked to depression. What's more, low ALA also decreases levels of the brain chemicals dopamine, which is responsible for feelings of joy, and serotonin, which inhibits anger and aggression.

Walnuts are also a good source of magnesium and phosphorus: Having low levels of magnesium has been linked to increased risk of depression, while high levels of magnesium have been linked to reduced symptoms of depression. Walnuts also contain cell-protecting antioxidants and are low in carbohydrates, which means they won't cause a spike in blood sugar and insulin. "Insulin spikes are a reason people's moods crap out, particularly in late afternoon," says Dr. Drew Ramsey, assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons and co-author of "The Happiness Diet."

CASHEWS, according to Dr Andrew Saul from the Food Matters film, two handfuls of cashews provide the equivalent mood boosting effects as a therapeutic dose of Prozac. How do they do this? They are one of the highest natural sources of tryptophan, the precursor for the production of serotonin, the feel good hormone, in the brain.

ALMONDS contain zinc, a key nutrient for maintaining a balanced mood – and have both iron and healthy fats. Healthy fats are an important part of a balanced diet, and low iron levels have been known to cause brain fatigue, which can contribute to both anxiety and a lack of energy.

SUNFLOWER SEEDS are a good source of magnesium. Numerous studies have demonstrated that magnesium helps reduce the severity of asthma, lower high blood pressure, and prevent migraine headaches, as well as reducing the risk of heart attack and stroke.

Magnesium is also necessary for healthy bones and energy production. About two-thirds of the magnesium in the human body is found in our bones. Some helps give bones their physical structure, while the rest is found on the surface of the bone where it is stored for the body to draw upon as needed.

Magnesium counterbalances calcium, thus helping to regulate nerve and muscle tone. Insufficient magnesium can contribute to high blood pressure, muscle spasms (including spasms of the heart muscle or the spasms of the airways symptomatic of asthma), migraine headaches, muscle cramps, tension, soreness and fatigue.

BANANAS are full of potassium and they also contain tryptophan, a brain chemical that helps to regulate mood and preserve memory. Bananas are also a good source of B vitamin folate, and having low levels of the vitamin B has been linked to depression. They are also excellent sources of the two important brain compounds dopamine and serotonin. Dopamine is the primary “reward” chemical in our bodies. When we do something and feel a sense of satisfaction, that satisfaction is the effect of dopamine in the brain. Dopamine helps to protect against some kinds of neuro-degeneration, including Parkinson’s disease. Dopamine demonstrates numerous benefits for the brain, helps to strengthen the heart, and enhances circulation.

Serotonin, on the other hand, may be the best known of all brain chemicals. Serotonin is our so-called “feel good” neurotransmitter. Serotonin is absolutely essential for mood, and is the target of numerous antidepressant drugs. Some of these drugs work to increase serotonin production, while others help to maintain serotonin in the brain for longer periods of time. Of all its many known functions, serotonin is powerfully antidepressant.

PLANTAINS are the cousins of bananas, but are starchy, and lower in sugar because of their moisture content. They both fall under the heading of super foods and have similar healing properties. Plantains, relatively, have more calories weight for weight than bananas and are very reliable sources of starch and energy.

COCONUT is a great mood-boosting food. Even the scent of coconut has been shown to reduce stress, anxiety, and lower blood pressure. Coconut can be a fantastic way to keep yourself happy because of its high levels of medium-chain triglycerides. Coconut will not get stored as fat because of this reason. Triglycerides are fats that aid your mood and promote brain health. Choose unsweetened, natural pieces of coconut or coconut shavings for the best effect.

CHOCOLATE – especially pure dark chocolate without the added sugars or milks – is also a great food for those living with anxiety and stress. Chocolate reduces cortisol – the stress hormone that causes anxiety symptoms. There are also compounds inside dark chocolate that improve mood. Consuming dark chocolate with at least 70 percent cacao content has also been shown to reduce anxiety. The antioxidants in dark chocolate can trigger the walls of your blood vessels to relax, lowering blood pressure and improving circulation. One study found that eating about an ounce and a half of dark chocolate daily for two weeks reduced levels of stress hormones in people who rated themselves as highly stressed. Dark chocolate also contains magnesium, a mineral that has been shown to help alleviate PMS symptoms, including fatigue, depression, and irritability. Dark chocolate’s unique natural substances trigger a sense of euphoria that’s similar in to the feeling of being in love!

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Falling Together-How to Find Balance, Joy, and Meaningful Change When your Life Seems to be Falling Apart
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