



How can nutrition help after a critical incident?

After any stressful event the stress hormones in your body will be elevated and these are harmful to your mental and physical health. Think of these stress hormones as a little fire in your body. If you choose to eat sugary, fatty and processed food you will increase the fire and the damage caused. However, if you choose to eat fibre rich whole foods these will help to put the fire out and you will recharge and recover more quickly.

There may be a lot of things out of your control right now, but diet and exercise are in your control. Take charge of your food and movement choices to lower your stress hormones and aid your recovery.

Here's what you can do to put the fire out...

1. **Eat lots of:**
 - a. **Fibre rich** foods such as brown carbohydrates. Think brown and grainy bread, crackers, cereals, pasta and rice.
 - b. **Fruit and vegetables.** These are a rich source of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and polyphenols.
 - c. **Anti-Inflammatory** foods such as fish, nuts and olive oil.
2. **Avoid junk food** – Yes, all the stuff you're probably craving right now. It's the worst thing you can do for your body when it's already under stress.
3. **Limit caffeine and alcohol** – Limit caffeine to 3 cups per day and avoid having any 8 hours before sleep time. Drinking alcohol should be avoided. Alcohol will affect your sleep quality and increase inflammation. Stick to recommended intakes and contact the alcohol and drug testing co-ordinator if you're using alcohol as a coping mechanism.

What does this look like?

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Breakfast	Muesli/Weet-Bix/ High fibre cereal (include nuts or sprinkle with LSA) Fruit	Eggs on wholegrain toast with mushroom tomato and spinach Coffee	Muesli/Weet-Bix/ High fibre cereal (include nuts or sprinkle with LSA) Fruit + coffee
Morning Tea	Fruit + coffee	Berry and spinach Smoothie	Vita wheat + peanut butter + carrot
Lunch	Baked beans + baby spinach and feta + 1 x wholegrain toast	Leftovers from night before	Wholegrain toasted sandwich with bacon (round only) + egg, avocado, salad greens and tomato
Afternoon tea	Vita wheat + avocado and tomato	Fruit + nuts	Yoghurt + fruit
Dinner	Mexican fajitas with red kidney beans.	Spaghetti bolognese with lentils	Salmon with sweet potato chips and broccolini