

Steady your nerves as you age

GOOD LIVING

BY SOLOMON KARANJA

consistent evidence that these products can generate hyperactivity and aggressiveness particularly in children. So mothers, avoid juicing your kids.

The common conditions exhibited by imbalance in the nervous system include nervousness, mental fatigue, epilepsy, insomnia, and stress, bulimia, anxiety, anorexia nervosa and Alzheimer's disease. The frequency of these conditions in today's world is rising such that corrective action when and where it occurs needs urgent attention. We also need to avoid them occurring.

The B group of vitamins are ubiquitously found in oats and whole grain, sunflower,

cashew nuts and green peas and most of the legumes. Yoghurt contains bacteria that help the body synthesise the B group of vitamins, which are necessary for proper functioning of the neurons.

Sedative

Lettuce is a vegetable which the Romans ate at night as a sleep aid after overeating supper. Today, the stressed urbanites can benefit from this effect of lettuce, not after but rather in place of supper. It has a sedative effect and people under the stress of weight loss diet need to retire early so that by the time the sense of fullness has, they will be fast asleep. It is recommended for functional disorders such as nervousness, stress or psychological tension or anxiety. A large supper consisting of only lettuce is recommended in case of insomnia (lack of sleep). It has low calories and hence recommended for diabetics and weight loss. It should be eaten well dressed in lemon. Cashew nuts, which are the most highly priced nuts, are rich in vitamins B1, B2 and minerals and have the highest level of magnesium content in the vegetable kingdom. They are roasted and eaten with or without salt. The juice of the stalk on which the nuts grow is sour and the stalk can be eaten fresh or as a juice and must be taken immediately since it is hard to preserve.

Magnesium is important in lowering



irritability, nervousness, cramps and spasms. For those who need stable muscles – footballers and athletes – cashew nuts are recommended. Almonds, especially the milk type, is highly recommended as an antioxidant in the body. Due to its low carbohydrate content, it is well tolerated by diabetics and beneficial to the nervous system as well.

Alcohol, meat and white sugar should be reduced in most nervous conditions as they aggravate the state. And you can stand calm and straight in a crowd when aged and surprise everybody by your cool nerves.

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Some people do not look their age when they stand up to speak in front of a crowd. Their backs are straight and their eyes bright. Some who are octogenarians say they even feel great. "Moses died at a hundred and twenty years, his eyes undimmed and his vigour unimpaired." (Deuteronomy 34: 8 – 10) Nelson Mandela, the African icon of statesmanship, is an old man who looks healthy. Limelight is something that comes later on in life when few expect it. Most elderly people confound expectations by living long and looking great. To this elderly citizens, their diets and eating habits are consistently healthy foods, although sometimes out of habit and inadvertently. It would be sad for one to be in the limelight at old age and not enjoy the light due to diseases caused by poor diet.

Brain

The nervous system is important for our survival and it is important to identify foods that preserve or impair it. The brain only requires two substances to function: oxygen and glucose. For higher functions such as thought memory and self-control, many other nutrients are needed. The B group of vitamins influence the healthy functions of the brain and nervous system. Lack of vitamin B1, for example, produces irritability and depression and absence of B6 causes nervousness and fatigue.

Lack of magnesium produces anxiety and nervousness and unsaturated fatty acids found in nuts are necessary for development of the nervous system and brain in children. Excess sugar consumption and certain additives in food such as colouring alter behaviour by affecting the nervous system. There is

