



INSPIRE
wellness & nutrition

Mindful Nutrition:
supporting anxiety
and emotional
eating

Anxiety

- Among the most commonly encountered medical conditions in primary care – 18% of US population... probably more
- Important to rule out other medical conditions
 - Cardiovascular
 - Gastrointestinal
 - Gynecologic
 - Neurologic
 - Respiratory
 - Endocrine



Integrative therapy

- Exercise
 - Majority of studies show an increase in physical activity = reduction in anxiety symptoms
 - Optimum results with aerobic activity for 40 minutes (walking, jogging, swimming, tennis, biking, etc)
 - Long lasting results
 - Physical activity is associated with changes in brain levels of norepinephrine, dopamine, and serotonin = improved mood
 - Physical activity is also associated with increase in endorphins

Nutrition therapy

- Caffeine – everyone is different
- Alcohol – reduces serotonin and catecholamine levels
- Omega 3 fatty acids – deficiency or imbalance associated with anxiety /depression



Essential Fatty Acids

- Omega 3's and 6's – need to get from our diets – *essential*
- Important roles in inflammation, blood clotting, cell membrane structure, breaking down cholesterol, lowering blood pressure, and more
- Balance is important – optimally omega 3:6 ratio should be 1:4.
- Western diet – ratio is 1:10 or more – even up to 1:50!
- Omega 3 fatty acids – EPA, DHA, ALA
 - tend to be anti-inflammatory, benefiting heart health
- Omega 6 fatty acids
 - Too much can be inflammatory, primarily used for energy



Omega 3 fatty acids

- EPA and DHA are the active forms of omega 3 fatty acids
 - Both have been shown to support anxiety and depression
- ALA is also omega 3, and is converted into EPA and DHA – but not efficiently
- Sources of EPA and DHA: cold water fatty fish (salmon, mackerel, sardines), fish oil supplements
- Sources of ALA: flaxseed, walnuts, canola oil, soybeans and soybean oil, pumpkin seeds

supplements



- B vitamins
 - B6 and B12 are linked with synthesis of S-adenosylmethionine (SAME)
 - Helps synthesize neurotransmitters
- Folic acid
 - Helps uptake of serotonin
- 5-Hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP)
 - Amino acid used in formation of serotonin
 - L-tryptophan converts to 5-HTP and then to serotonin
- Caution!!! Always discuss any supplements with your health care practitioner. Any agent that boosts serotonin (L-Tryptophan or 5-HTP) can interfere with other medications (especially anxiety or depression medications).



botanicals

- Kava – derived from the pulverized lateral roots of a subspecies of pepper plant – short term use
- Teas
 - Valerian
 - Skull cap – member of mint family



Emotional eating

- This anxiety we are feeling can lead to emotional eating
- Why food?
 - Fills a void – we don't have the normal social supports to get us through negative thoughts
 - Changing cortisol levels due to stress can lead to physiological cravings – for salt/sugar
 - Reaction to triggers

What can we do?

- Move your body - even for just a few minutes
- Meditate
- Have healthy snacks available
- Remove ultra-processed snacks from your pantry
- “phone a friend”

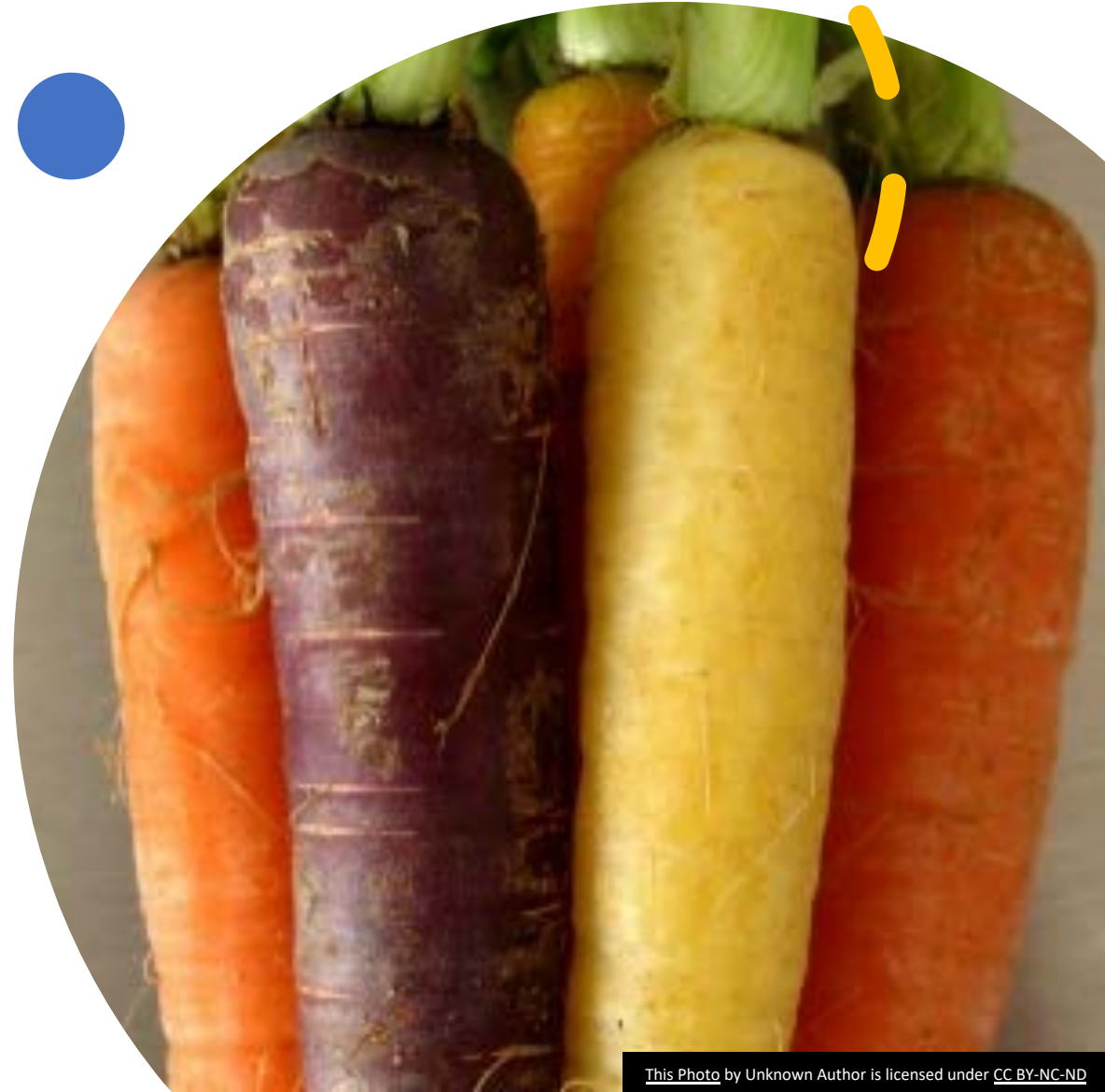


Recipe of the Week

- **A Carrot Cake Makeover**

Ingredients:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup coconut sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup butter, coconut oil, or ghee
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 4 large eggs – room temperature
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups blanched almond flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups grated carrots
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups chopped pecans (divided)
- Cream cheese frosting (see my notes)





- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Line 2 - 9 inch cake pans with parchment, or use springform pans if available. Grease bottoms and sides.



In large bowl cream
together butter and
coconut sugar until
fluffy





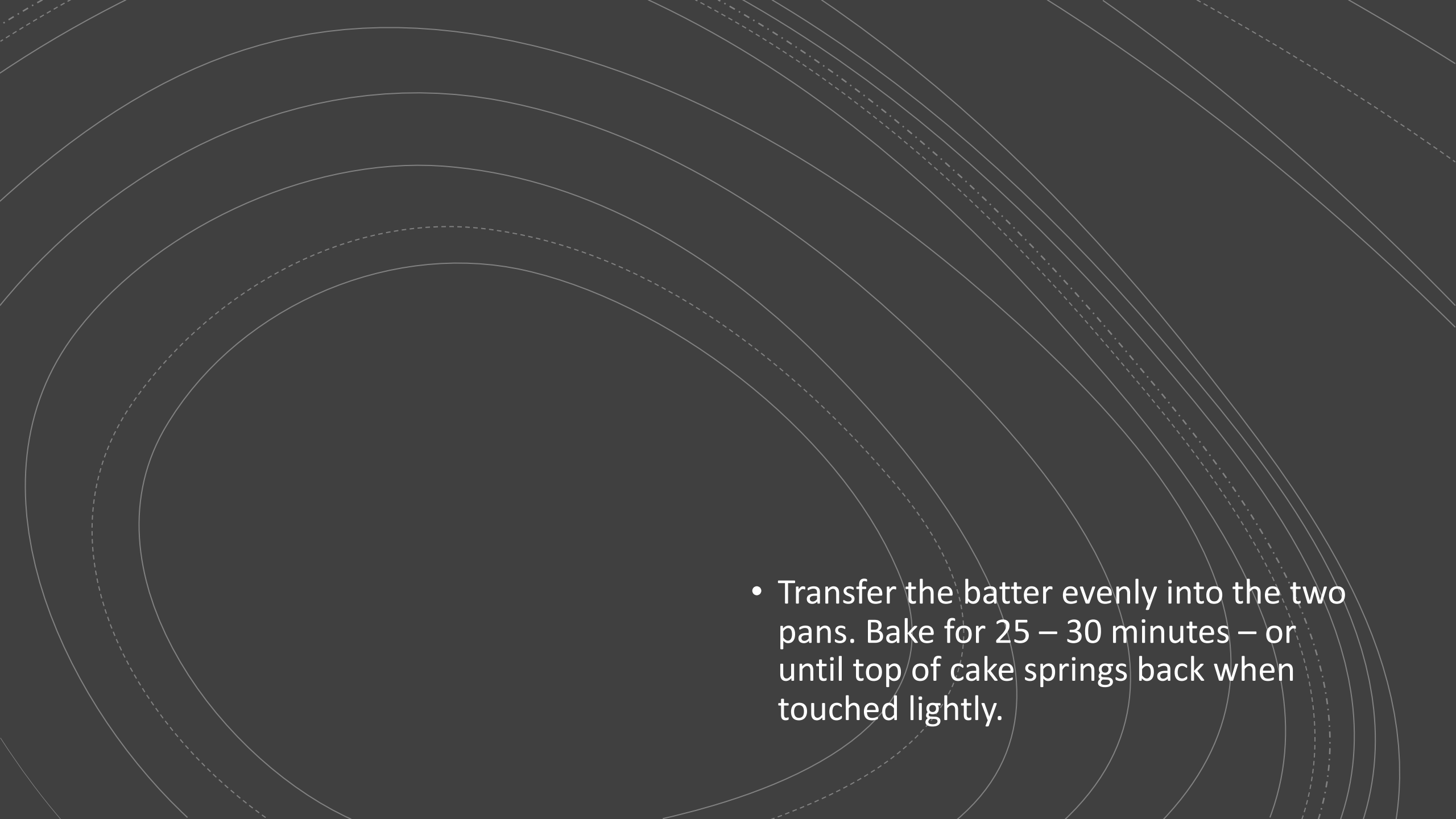
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- Beat in vanilla and eggs – one at a time. Set aside.



- In another bowl mix together the almond flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Stir the dry ingredients into the bowl with wet ingredients.



- Stir in the grated carrots and 1 cup of pecans.

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- The background of the slide is a dark gray color, featuring a series of concentric, slightly irregular circles in a lighter gray shade. These circles are centered roughly in the middle of the frame and expand outwards towards the edges, creating a subtle, organic pattern.
- Transfer the batter evenly into the two pans. Bake for 25 – 30 minutes – or until top of cake springs back when touched lightly.

- Cool the cakes for 10 minutes in the pans, then remove to a wire rack to cool completely.
- Frost with choice of frosting... I used a “wholefoods find”... then top with remaining ½ cup pecans



Enjoy!

