While it might be an obvious thing to say, having a panic attack is terrifying. They can pop up out of nowhere, and make you feel like this are crumbling around you. If you experience this, know first of all that you are not alone. And one thing to do as a helpful way of coping is to have a toolbox of things to do during a panic attack as it arises.

As Carrie Krawiec, LMFT at Birmingham Maple Clinic tells Bustle, panic attacks can be triggered by a combination of things like stress, physiological symptoms, or a traumatic experience that caused our body to trip its natural flight or fight response. Certain medical conditions and or medications can also trigger panic.

"Panic attacks can be intense fear mixed with increased heart rate, lightheadedness, and shallow breathing," Krawiec says. "In some cases the presence of one of these
symptoms can cause a person to fear passing out or heart attack which can actually cause a panic attack [to increase]."

She says that she tells her clients that a panic attack is when the body and mind misreads it’s natural fire alarm system and treats a drill or false alarm like it’s the real thing. But once we recognize what is going on, we can start to shift that response.

Below, take some pro tips on what you can do the moment the panic arises to help you cope with the intensity. Help is out there, my friends.

1. Acknowledge What Is Happening

As impossible as it may seem, there is a moment where you can create a little space between the panic-driven thoughts, and some calm and logic.
Dr. Sharone Weltsfreid tells Bustle that when thoughts like, "I am having a heart attack" or "I am losing control" are intruding, you can recognize that these statements are not facts and allow them to pass as quickly as they arose.

While it might be difficult, reminding yourself that you know what is happening, and that this panic will eventually stop can be a helpful way to gain calm in the moment, and also help give you a long-term strategy for preventing attacks in the future.

2. Wrap Yourself In A Blanket

Psychotherapist Rev. Connie L. Habash tells Bustle that for some people, being wrapped up in something warm and cozy is calming and can offer some relief in the moment. "It's much like a baby is soothed by swaddling," she says.

Ultimately, it's figuring out the tricks that work for you and your body.
3. Give Yourself A Moment To Practice Breathing

Dr. Danielle Ibelema tells Bustle when panic starts, engage in deep breathing. It starts to slow down the central nervous system. And try to exhale longer than you inhale.

"You can engage in deep breathing solo, but there also apps that you can use for guidance too. Calm is my favorite app for this purpose," she says.

Dr. Ibelema also says that significant anxiety or panic symptoms tends to warrant the help of a mental health professional for counseling or medication if it starts to interfere with your life.
4. Remove Yourself From The Situation If Possible

Perhaps you are at work or at dinner at a fancy restaurant. Wherever you are, Dr. Laura Dabney tells Bustle that she encourages clients, the moment they are having a panic attack or serious feelings of anxiety, to somehow remove themselves from the situation if possible.

Feeling safe and without fear of judgment can help to alleviate some extra sense of fear.

"Once they are removed and safe I have them start really thinking about what has been happening leading up to that point," Dr. Dabney says.
If you are somewhere like a train or car, try to close your eyes and put in headphones to create some personal space.

5. Focus On What's Going Out Outside Your Body

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It can feel impossible to consider anything other than the overwhelming feelings in the moment, but psychotherapist Christine Scott-Hudson tells Bustle that as much as you can, try to focus outside of yourself and on your environment.

"Focus on what is going on outside of your body," Scott-Hudson says. "Count all of the green objects in the room. Practice grounding, feel your feet on the floor. Feel the chair supporting your body."
Anything that can lift your thoughts and perspective from feeling the current state of panic.

6. Create A Calming Playlist

Dr. Ibelema says that if you already know that you experience anxiety or panic attacks, create a relaxing or inspiring playlist that you can access quickly when needed as a great option for distraction.

"There are times when these options are not enough," she says. But the more choices you have in the moment, the better.
7. Don't Fight The Fear

It seems counterintuitive, but instead of trying to calm yourself down, consider taking a mental stance of "inviting" the panic in. It often has the effect of helping you feel like you have some power Nita Sweeney, author of Depression Hates a Moving Target, tells Bustle.

"If a person who feels the anxiety building toward a panic attack says, 'Come on panic. Give me all you've got' and means it fully, this will often cause the panic to subside," she says.
It is difficult to convince people to try allowing the thoughts and body sensations to come and go without fighting them, she says, but it can be really helpful.

8. Get Yourself To Move Around

Dr. Kim Peirano, a doctor of acupuncture and Chinese medicine tells Bustle that it is helpful to remember that anxiety can be a by-product of anger, there may be fear present with the anxiety of course, but many times the underlying cause is actually unexpressed anger.
"Think of it like a kettle boiling but with no steam release, the kettle will boil but without the outlet for the excess energy from the heat, the kettle will begin jumping and bouncing around, this is a perfect metaphor for anxiety," says Dr. Peirano.

"So when we’re in the midst of a panic attack, going against all of our instincts to retreat and shut down, what can be really helpful is to actually move around and release some physical energy," Dr. Peirano says. This can be some calisthenic movements, boxing moves, going for a run, or anything that gets the blood moving and heart pumping.

There is no doubt that panic attacks are incredibly difficult to experience. But knowing how to reach out for help, and figuring out ways that can bring you relief during in the moment can truly get you on the road to recovery.

Editor's Note: If you or someone you know is seeking help for mental health concerns, visit the National Alliance on Mental Health (NAMI) website, or call 1-800-950-NAMI(6264). For confidential treatment referrals, visit the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) website, or call the National Helpline at 1-800-662-HELP(4357). In an emergency, contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK(8255) or call 911.
Whether it's acne, fatigue, or some serious PMS that you're dealing with, you might have suspected, or been told, that your health concerns have to do with some out of whack hormones. While the best way to deal with this might be with a healthcare professional of some kind, incorporating some foods that balance your hormones is a great way to keep it all in check.

As wellness coach Betsy Leahy tells Bustle, her overall advice for optimal hormone health is to incorporate more plant-based foods into your lifestyle during this time. But she also says that there are certain foods to think about avoiding or moderating when it comes to hormone happiness.
"The liver plays a role in hormone health and some foods can overload the liver, thereby affecting hormones," Leahy says. "Reducing trans-fats, refined sugars as well as to moderate alcohol and caffeine consumption will help"

And finally, she says, although it is not a food, stress is something people should consider big-time, first and foremost, in fact, when the hormones are in question. Stress really affects those cortisol levels, and can oftentimes lead to eating and drinking more types of foods that can cause hormone disruption, she says. Incorporating stress reduction techniques like meditation, exercise, and measured breathing are also an important addition to overall balance.

Take some tips from the pros on what foods to include in your daily meals for optimal hormone health.

1. **Cruciferous Vegetables**

![Cruciferous Vegetables](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

Sean Gallup/Getty Images News/Getty Images

Get out that steamer, my friends. It's broccoli time.
"These vegetables are known as hormone cleansers' as they have a compound called Indole 3 Carbimol (I3C) that helps the body eliminate excess estrogen," Dr. Jennifer Pearlman of PearlMD Rejuvenation, tells Bustle.

Cruciferous vegetables high in I3C include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, bok choy, turnips, and kale, says Dr. Pearlman.

And to increase your intake of I3C, it is best to consume these veggies lightly steamed.

2. Low Sugar Fruits Like Berries

So many delicious berries to choose from, and they are a great low-sugar fruit to help with blood sugar and hormone regulation.

"Berries are packed with loads of antioxidants. Antioxidants are used to protect our cells from damage and to keep our tissues healthy," says Dr. Pearlman.
Put those babies in smoothies, pop them in salads, or just eat them as is.

3. Flax Seeds

Whether you sprinkle them in your oatmeal, bake some into muffins, or throw it in a smoothie, flax is a great option.

"Flax is high in omega-3 essential fatty acids, antioxidants and fibre. It also has a compound called lignans which may have a regulating effect on estrogen levels," says Dr. Pearlman.

She says using freshly ground flax is the best option as "it can oxidize quickly."
Iron deficiency is very common in females throughout their reproductive years, and that definitely impacts hormonal levels.

"Only one cup of steamed chard contains four grams of iron and is also packed with vitamin C to help with the absorption of that iron," says Dr. Pearlman.

Other great sources include spinach, collard greens, kale, beet greens, and dandelion greens. Yum!
5. Walnuts

Trail mix anyone? Or how about some banana bread chock full of walnuts? Walnuts are a great source of omega-3 fatty acids and polyphenols, says Dr. Pearlman.

"Polyphenols play an important role in fighting free radicals and protecting our cardiovascular system," she says. "Omega-3s are known to be one of the fundamental building blocks of the brain, critical for brain health and studied to boost mood, improve memory and brain function."

Other rich-sources of Omega-3s include wild fish, ground flaxseed, flax oil, chia seeds, and grass-fed animal products.
6. Turmeric

Dietician Shira Sussi tells Bustle that turmeric — whether adding it to foods during the cooking process or taking a supplement — helps to support the liver, which is where endocrine disrupters are detoxified.

The good news is, you can add it to just about anything from soup to eggs, so sprinkle a little in whenever the mood strikes.
These alternative milks are recommended specifically for mood hormones, because they are high in Vitamin D.

"There are so many studies that have demonstrated vitamin D plays a role with most bodily functions including mood with both women and men," Dr. Elizabeth Trattntertells Bustle. "If we spend little time outside, we need to supplement with vitamin D since we make it from sunlight."
Fatty fish like salmon, tuna, sardines, and herring are great, says Dr. Trattner. The fats in these seafoods have a host of benefits.

"[Fish] can help with depression, lowering inflammation, concentration, focus, cognitive function, mood, brain health and almost every other health condition," says Dr. Trattner.

Not bad, right?