



BRAIN HEALTHY COOKING

Boost your brain health by eating well! Brain Healthy Nutrition Guidelines

1. Eat Dark Colored Fruits

Choose:

Blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries, cranberries, plums



Why?

Berry compounds have the highest number of naturally occurring antioxidant levels and can counteract inflammation, associated with heart disease and Alzheimer's.

2. Control Blood Sugar



Choose:

Stevia (also in Truvia® and Purevia™), **molasses** (blackstrap is most beneficial) **honey, agave, raw sugar**

Not: **Corn syrup** (especially high fructose), **refined white sugar**, or **artificial sweeteners** like saccharine or aspartame

Why?

Sugar imbalances shrink the hippocampus, the part of our brain critical for short-term memory. Pre-diabetes & diabetes are a risk factor for Alzheimer's and cognitive decline.

3. Substitute Whole Grains for White

Choose:

Whole grain breads, quinoa, brown rice, wheat, bulgar, barley, whole grain pasta, farro, oats, oatmeal, wild rice, millet, whole wheat couscous

Not: **White bread, white rice, white pasta**

Why?

High-processed, refined carbs, like white bread, stress the insulin system, a risk factor for Alzheimer's. Whole grains are a good source of fiber, magnesium and iron, important for heart and brain health.



4. Spice it Up

Choose:

Cinnamon ½ to 1 tsp daily, **rosemary, oregano, turmeric, ginger**



Why?

Many spices have amazing protective properties, reducing inflammation and increasing blood flow to the heart and brain.

Diet changes can benefit you at any age, whether or not you have memory loss.

5. Have Extra Leafy Greens

What to Eat:

Aim high: 7-10 portions a day

Broccoli, spinach, brussels sprouts, swiss chard, kale, collard greens, cabbage, bok choy, all the lettuces (NOT iceberg)



Why?

Leafy greens contain high levels of antioxidants including vitamins A and E. They also contain traces of Omega 3's and other brain healthy nutrients.

6. Go Nuts!



Choose:

Almonds & walnuts (improve learning & memory),

Hazelnuts & pecans (high in vitamin E, a great antioxidant and essential brain cell protector),

Pistachios, brazil nuts, peanuts, pine nuts

Why?

Eating a handful of nuts and seeds every day helps you reduce bad cholesterol, blood sugar, oxidative stress and inflammation - all risk factors for Alzheimer's.

7. Increase Your Omega-3 Oils

What to Eat:

Cold water fish (salmon, halibut, sardines, tuna, etc.),

Scallops & shrimp, green vegetables (broccoli, brussels sprouts, spinach), **cauliflower, squash, walnuts, flax seeds, pumpkin seeds, tofu, soybeans**

Why?

As you age, levels of Omega 3's in your body drop. These oils improve transmission of nerve impulses, are important for building cell membranes in the brain, and have anti-inflammatory properties.



8. Reduce your Cholesterol Levels



Choose:

Seafood and healthier lean cuts of meat

Low-fat dairy and yogurt over high-saturated fats, like cream

Ground turkey instead of hamburger

Olive or canola oil rather than corn oil

Why?

An abundance of cholesterol and saturated fat clogs arteries, leading to coronary heart disease and stroke, risk factors for Alzheimer's. However, HDL (or "good") cholesterol may help protect brain cells.

Brain healthy nutrition guidelines from the kitchen of 

Visit The Brain Healthy Cooking Guide at SeniorLivingResidences.com