



Brain Boosting Foods

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What Are the Key Steps Used to Improve Cognitive Function?



- Add brain boosting foods and lower glycemic load
- Meet essential nutrient needs
- Add physical and mental fitness
- Proactively manage stress
- Avoid brain toxins
- These have become the five steps in my Better Brain Solution program

To Get You Started Fast, Follow As Many Steps as You Can

- Five steps work better together than only 1-2.
- Several recent studies (e.g. FINGER) have confirmed that combining multiple, diverse lifestyle interventions at once is far more effective than only following one step by itself
- I promise to make following them both fun and simple.

STEP 1: Eat Fabulous Food

- You want to eat foods that
 - Nourish your brain, body and soul
 - Improve blood sugar control and prevent insulin resistance
 - Are easy to prepare
 - Food must taste fantastic or people won't eat it

#1 Food, Eat Your Veggies

- People who eat more green leafy veggies are 11 years younger than those who don't
- Nitrate rich foods (such as beets, arugula, and spinach) increase blood flow to the brain
- Eat at least 1 cup of green leafy vegetables daily (broccoli, kale, collard greens, bok choy)
- Eat at least 3 cups of colorful low glycemic vegetables daily
 - Beets, carrots, peppers, tomatoes, avocado, onions, fennel, asparagus, peas, artichoke

Eat More Healthy Fats

- Eat omega-3 rich seafood 3 times/week, or take an omega-3 supplement (quality is essential)
 - Wild salmon, sardines, herring, sole, mussels, oysters, or
 - 1,000 mg of DHA & EPA with low levels of lipid peroxides daily (they should not be rancid)
- Use 1-2 Tbsp of extra virgin olive oil daily
- Eat 1-2 handfuls (1-2 ounces) of nuts daily
 - Almonds, pecans, walnuts, pistachios, pecans, hazel, macadamias

Choose the Right Fats for Cooking

- Higher heat: avocado oil
- Medium-high heat: Virgin olive oil, avocado, almond and macadamia nut oils (or organic ghee)
- Low heat: Extra virgin olive oil, **coconut oil**, walnut oil
- Salads: Extra virgin olive oil and nut oils

Consume More Plant Pigments

- 1-2 cups of berries and cherries daily
- 1-2 Tbsp of cocoa, or 1-2 ounces of dark chocolate (>74% cacao) daily
- Have 2-4 cups of tea daily (matcha is the best source of theanine)
 - Or have 1-3 cups of coffee daily
 - If you are caffeine sensitive: ok to have decaf tea or coffee
- Red wine (only in moderation, 1-2 servings/day) enhance cognition

Uses More Spices and Herbs

- Spices and herbs make your food taste fantastic, and they decrease inflammation and oxidation
- Best brain benefit: turmeric & rosemary
- Use more Italian herb seasonings, curry spices, paprika, garlic, ginger, and chile spices
 - At least ½-1 tsp dried, or 1-2 Tbsp fresh, for lunch and dinner

What to Buy Organic?

- 40% of pesticides come from eating meat and poultry
 - Buy organic-fed, pasture raised animal products
 - When eating out; order wild, grass-fed, or order vegetarian
- 40% of pesticides come from dairy products
 - Buy organic dairy or skip it
- 10% come from whole grains, legumes, beverages
 - Buy organic tea and coffee (they are high in pesticides)
- 10% come from vegetables and fruits
 - Pick organic fruits and vegetables from the EWG dirty dozen list; not everything needs to be organic

FOODS TO AVOID

- Partially hydrogenated (trans) fats
- Foods that cause your blood sugar levels to rise, especially all “High-Sugar-Load” foods
 - Eat more foods with a low-glycemic-load
 - All fruit except bananas, and all vegetables except potatoes, have a low glycemic load (GL)
 - Others with a low GL: beans, nuts, and protein sources: free-range steak, cage-free, organic poultry and eggs, wild seafood, yogurt

Glycemic Load

- Low GL is 1-10
- Medium is >10-20
- High is >20

What Foods Have a Low GL?

- All fruits except bananas
- All vegetables except potatoes
- All beans and nuts
- Snacks: hummus guacamole, dark chocolate
- The only grain/cereal is steel cut oatmeal
- Beverages such as tea, coffee, almond milk, cow's milk, soy milk, wine

Medium GL Foods

- Sweet potato baked
- Small purple and red potatoes, boiled
- Banana
- Grains: Rolled oats, Whole grain pasta, Barley, Quinoa (technically a seed), Wild rice, corn tortillas
- Pumpernickel bread

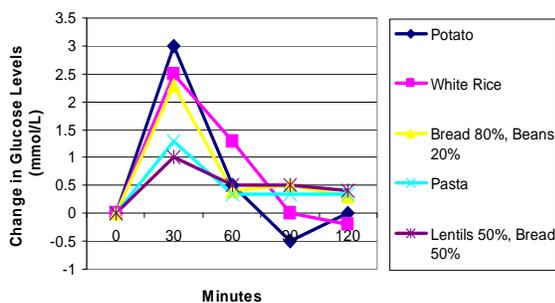
High GL Foods to Avoid

- Bread, bagels, tortilla chips, pretzels
- Baked potato, potato chips
- Corn, rice, white flour pasta
- Corn flakes, granola
- Sodas, Gatorade
- Ice cream

FOR 30 DAYS: Avoid ALL Foods with High-Glycemic-Load; to Reset Blood Sugar Control

- Anything made with sugar and/or grain flour (a donut, ice cream, chips, candy bars, cookies, pudding, cakes)
- Especially, don't drink beverages with sugar (soda, sweet tea, diet sodas)
- Avoid baked potatoes, mashed potatoes, rice, white pasta, cereal; whole grain bread, crackers, granola

Glycemic Response to Various Types of Carbohydrates with an Equal Quantity of Carbohydrate



Adapted with Permission from Chew et al. Am J Clin Nutr 1995;47:53-56.

LEGUMES: a wonder food!

- Lower LDL levels
- Raise HDL levels
- Control blood sugar and insulin levels
- Suppress appetite
- Associated with decreased cancer risk (especially soy products)
- **The challenge is lectins**
 - For some people, they are hard to digest
 - Consider soaking to break down lectins

Probiotics

- Essential for your gut microbiome, critical for your brain, they lower inflammation
- Dairy sources: **plain** yogurt, kefir
- Plant sources: pickles, sauerkraut, miso, tempeh, kombucha, natto, kimchi
- Aim for 2 sources per day, or take a supplement
- You must eat 30 grams of fiber (10 servings) per day or your probiotic bacteria will starve and die
- If you require an antibiotic (pneumonia), plan on a supplement boost with 25-50 billion per day for 2-3 months

TOP 12 FOODS TO ADD FOR YOUR BRAIN

1. Green leafy vegetables
2. Other colorful vegetables
3. Omega-3 rich seafood
4. Olive oil and other healthy cooking oils
5. Organic berries and cherries
6. Cocoa and dark chocolate
7. Tea and coffee in moderation
8. Red wine in moderation
9. Nuts
10. Spices and herbs
11. Beans (they have a low glycemic load)
12. Probiotic sources

5-Step Guide to a Better Brain

- Step 1: Fabulous Foods
- Step 2: Essential Brain Nutrients
- Step 3: Physical and Mental exercises
- Step 4: Stress management
- Step 5: How to avoid brain toxins

Combine as many steps as feasible.