



Foods for Thought: Brain Health

September is Alzheimer's Awareness Month. It is estimated that 5.7 million Americans of all ages are living with Alzheimer's dementia. These numbers are staggering and make it likely that you personally know someone that's affected by this disease.

Currently, there is no cure for Alzheimer's, and there are no foolproof preventive measures. However, focusing on an overall healthy lifestyle is a way to prevent cognitive decline.

Foods to Focus on:

Fatty Fish: Wild-caught, cold-water, fatty fish supplies a rich source of omega-3 fatty acids DHA and EPA. These fats are anti-inflammatory and promote optimal brain function by providing the building blocks for brain tissue, and support memory, judgment and reasoning. Focus on low mercury fish like wild caught salmon and sardines.

Berries: Berries get their deep color from the phytochemical, anthocyanin. These plant compounds are anti-inflammatory and powerful antioxidants. The antioxidants are helpful in preventing oxidation in the brain and improve communication between brain cells.

Turmeric/Cinnamon/Ginger: These three spices are known for their powerful antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties. Curcumin, found in turmeric, can pass the blood brain barrier and directly benefit the cells in the brain.

Walnuts: Walnuts are rich in alpha-linolenic acid (an omega-3 essential fatty acid) and are excellent for brain health. They are also a good source of vitamin E which is a powerful antioxidant that fights free radicals.

Eggs: Eggs from pasture-raised hens provide a rich source of choline which is an important brain nutrient. Choline supports the central nervous system and is the building block to important neurotransmitters that play a part in memory and learning.

Green Tea/Coffee: Both green tea and coffee contain caffeine and antioxidants which are beneficial for your brain. Caffeine increases alertness, improves mood by boosting your "feel-good" neurotransmitters, and sharpens concentration. The antioxidants help protect the brain from oxidative stress. The antioxidants found in green tea, the catechins, are some of the most powerful antioxidants found in food.

Lifestyle Recommendations

- ✓ Quit smoking
 - ✓ Exercise regularly
 - ✓ Avoid fish high in mercury
 - ✓ Exercise your mind through cognitive training exercises
 - ✓ Eat anti-inflammatory foods and more antioxidants
 - ✓ Minimize highly processed foods (refined carbs, sugary drinks, refined vegetable oils)
- ➔ Just like any chronic disease, Alzheimer's development and progression is fueled by unbridled inflammation. Chronic inflammation increases the production of free radicals. These free radicals cause oxidative damage to the brain. The goal in prevention is to reduce inflammation, protect the brain from oxidative damage, and supply the brain with nutrients.



RECIPE
Blueberry-Turmeric Smoothie

This easy and delicious blueberry-turmeric smoothie recipe is loaded with ingredients containing anti-inflammatory properties and powerful antioxidants essential to maintaining good brain health!

Ingredients

- 1 cup frozen blueberries
- 1-inch piece of fresh ginger, peeled and grated
- 1-inch piece of fresh turmeric, peeled and grated
- ½ cup coconut water
- ½ cup coconut milk, almond milk, or whole milk
- ½ cup ice
- 2 tablespoons almond, sunflower, or peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 tablespoon chia seeds
- 2 tablespoons walnuts, dry toasted

Directions

Add all ingredients into a blender and blend on high until mix together. Serve immediately.

Serves: 2



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Canned Salmon



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Coffee



Blueberries



Cinnamon



Hot Green Tea



Frozen Berries



Curry Powder



Walnuts