



Simple Suggestions to Make Your Diet More Brain Healthy

Adapted from *Brain Building Nutrition* by Michael A. Schmidt

- ▲ **Eat more fish:** recommended 2+ servings per week. Certain types of fish contain some of the most important essential fatty acids for the brain and body.
 - *Cold water fish with Omega-3 content:* Albacore tuna, Anchovies, Bluefin, caviar, Eel, Herring, Krill Oil, Mackerel, Plankton, algae, Salmon, Sardine, Trout
 - *Fresh water fish where Omega-3 can also be found (in much smaller amounts):* Lake trout, Walleye, Carp, Haddock, Northern pike

- ▲ **Eat more antioxidant rich foods.**
 - *Foods high in antioxidants:* blackberries, walnuts, strawberries, artichokes (prepared), cranberries, coffee, raspberries, pecans, blueberries, ground cloves, grapes, cranberry, dark chocolate, sour cherries, pineapple, prunes, red cabbage, oranges, apples, bran flakes (breakfast cereals), black plums, pinto beans, spinach, kiwi, dark molasses, red potatoes, sweet potatoes, unsweetened tea, russet potatoes, broccoli, red peppers

- ▲ **Eat brightly colored fruits and vegetables with every meal.** They contain nutrients that protect the brain's fatty acid molecules.
 - *Best fruit protectors:* blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, raspberries, plums, oranges, grapes
 - *Best vegetable protectors:* alfalfa sprouts, beets, broccoli florets

- ▲ **Add more fresh spices to your food.**
 - *Common spices that influence inflammation that also may protect or preserve brain fatty acids:* garlic, ginger, onion, oregano, rosemary, thyme, turmeric
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- ▲ **Eat more eggs, but don't overcook them.** Eggs contain DHA, one of the most essential fatty acids for brain health, and can be cooked out if the eggs are cooked too long.

- ▲ **Include less fructose (a sugar alternative) in your diet.** Fructose increases insulin resistance (where the body fails to regulate its blood sugar and makes more insulin than normal to try to correct it). Evidence suggests that those with impaired glucose tolerance (insulin resistance) have smaller memory centers in the brain.



- ⤴ **Include foods lower on the glycemic index.** Long term consumption of foods with a high glycemic load (GL) appear to be linked to a greater risk towards developing issues with diabetes, obesity, and inflammation and may have a significant impact on brain fatty acids, blood glucose metabolism, brain inflammation, brain oxidative stress, and lessened brain function (for more information on the glycemic index: <http://www.glycemicindex.com/>).
 - Less risky foods score 10 or below
 - More risky foods score 20 and above
 - *Fruit and nuts are surprisingly low on the glycemic index*

- ⤴ **Eat less foods with omega-6's and more with omega-3's.** Balance foods like almonds, hazelnuts, olive oil, peanuts, pistachios, sesame seeds, and sunflower seeds with an equal amount of brazil nuts, green leafy vegetables, pumpkin seeds, walnuts, and fish.

- ⤴ **Foods with trans fatty acids should only be eaten occasionally.** *Commons foods high in trans fatty acids:* cake, candy, cookies, corn chips, doughnuts, margarine, mayonnaise, potato chips, puffed cheese snacks, salad dressing (other than olive oil based), shortening, tortilla chips, and deep-fried foods like chicken nuggets, fish burgers, and french fries.

- ⤴ **Cook with oils to preserve their integrity.** Oils, and the essential fatty acids in them, are easily damaged by high heat cooking. They should never be heated to the point of smoking.
 - *Oils that can be used in light baking:* almond, chia, coconut, ghee, hazelnut, krill, olive, safflower, sunflower
 - *Oils that can be used to saute foods:* almond, coconut, ghee, hazelnut, krill, olive, pistachio, sesame
 - *Oils that can be applied after food has been cooked/prepared:* almond, borage, canola, chia, DHA (from algae), flax, ghee, hazelnut, krill, olive, pistachio, pumpkin, safflower, sunflower, walnut, sesame
 - *Use the “wet saute method” to preserve oil integrity.* Use a small amount of water in the skillet and heat until just below boiling. Add the food and, as it becomes cooked, add a small amount of the oil.

