

BRAIN FOODS 101

Need a brain boost? Eating a variety of colorful foods may help fuel your brain. That's right...be sure your diet is filled with a rainbow of different colored fruits and veggies and even a few surprises as well. These foods may increase alertness, combat memory loss, improve brain function, and even fight off diseases that affect the brain. So why not give yourself that extra edge after hours spent studying, researching, and writing papers by eating the foods you love?



Go Green!

- Dark green leafy vegetables (i.e. spinach, romaine, broccoli) are loaded with antioxidants that may help with memory retention and, as an added bonus, boost your brain power.
- Green tea may improve cognitive learning, relax the brain, and increase mental alertness due to the fact that green tea is loaded with antioxidants that may help oxygen circulate.



Radical Red!

- Tomatoes are good for brain health. The phytochemical lycopene is present in tomatoes and protects against free radical damage to cells, which can lead to diseases that affect the brain. Go for cooked or processed tomato products (i.e. tomato sauce, stewed tomatoes, etc.), as the lycopene is more easily absorbed compared to raw tomatoes.
- Apples, as well as other fruits and vegetables, are good fuel sources for your body that may help stimulate your brain. Apples are a great snack that are not only tasty and delicious, but are brain foods as well.



Purple Power!

- Purple foods could be especially beneficial for the brain. Anthocyanins, the phytochemical that gives foods their purple color might actually stave off memory loss. Berries, cherries, eggplant, and more, have been shown to improve learning ability, memory, and coordination skills in certain studies.

Powerful Protein!

- Eating food rich in Omega-3's (docosahexaenoic acid-DHA) found in fish (i.e. salmon) can improve brain function and mood. Don't like fish... try walnuts.

- Eggs are a rich source of choline, which can help your brain. Studies have found that increasing choline intake can improve memory, and egg yolks are among the richest and easiest natural sources of choline. Enjoy your scrambled eggs and omelets!

Brown Boost!

- Whole grains (i.e. whole wheat bread, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, oats, etc.) are great for maintaining concentration throughout the day and may even help to improve memory. That's because they contain the perfect mix of carbohydrates and fiber to fuel your brain while keeping you full.
- Beans are not only a great vegetarian protein source, they are filled with iron. Iron deficiency is the most common nutrient deficiency in the United States and can contribute to shortened attention span, lowered intelligence, poor coordination, and inability to concentrate since iron helps transport oxygen to brain cells. Additional sources of iron include meat, iron-fortified green leafy vegetables, and more. To boost iron absorption, eat foods high in Vitamin C food along with your meal.
- Dark chocolate is more than a treat. It is rich in flavanols that boost blood supply to the brain, helping to increase alertness. It may also improve cognitive skills. In addition, it contains caffeine which can help improve concentration and focus (However, too much caffeine is not good and can make you jittery and cause other negative effects). Moderation with dark chocolate is key and remember, you only need to consume a small amount to receive the benefits. Look for cocoa content. The higher the percentage of cocoa the more benefits it will have, however the more bitter the taste. Find your balance and enjoy!

Info from: www.eatright.org
www.hungrygirl.com
www.mayoclinic.com

Providence College Dining offers a great selection of "Brain Foods." Be sure to check them out!

Questions? Please speak to a manager today, we are happy to help!

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Danielle Shargorodsky, RD, LDN is available to help all students, faculty, and staff with any nutrition related questions/problems you may have, including healthy choices, food allergies, medical nutrition therapy, etc. Please feel free to contact her at 401-500-5151 or Danielle.RD@sodexo.com.