

Cultural Daily

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The Best Brain Foods

Our Friends · Monday, March 16th, 2020

If the heart is the engine, then the brain is the control centre of the body. We spend a lot of time concerned about blood-pressure, heart-rates and exercise to [keep the body healthy](#), but how much time do we spend on the brain itself?

What can you do to keep the brain healthy? You can keep it sharp by engaging and stimulating it, but you can also eat the correct foods. Foods that give the brain exactly what it wants! Here is a quick look at some of these brain foods which can help to improve memory and function.

Oily or fatty fish

Omega 3 rich fish is the first food that springs to mind. The brain requires Omega 3 to form nerve cells and these fats are also required for memory and learning.

Deficiencies in Omega 3 have been linked to learning difficulties and a healthy intake of the fatty acid has been shown to reduce the chances of memory loss and problems like dementia or Alzheimer's.

Eating oily fish can improve a person's mood and help the individual manage their emotions.

Nuts and seeds

Like oily fish, nuts and seeds contain a high level of Omega 3, acids and antioxidants. Sunflower seeds, hazelnuts and almonds contain the antioxidant vitamin E, which has been linked with improved cognition and minimised chances of degenerative brain disease.

Dark Chocolate

Dark chocolate is recommended as a food that improves mental health; it has been shown to have positive effects on people suffering from depression. It also contains flavanoids, which are antioxidants that boost memory and again slow age-related deterioration in the brain.

Above all it's a great excuse to eat chocolate!

Coffee

Perhaps one of the more surprising options in the list, coffee is beneficial for the brain. You may be associate coffee with stress and anxiety, due to its caffeine levels, but in fact, the caffeine in coffee

has several positive effects on the brain. It increases alertness, concentration and it can have positive effects on our mood and behaviour.

Drinking coffee has also been linked to reducing the probability of developing Alzheimer and Parkinson, if sustained over the long term.

Avocado

Avocados are a great source of non-saturated, healthy fats and consuming avocados has been linked with preventing cognitive decline. Eating the correct fats reduces high blood pressure and therefore slows the deterioration of brain cells.

Avocados are delicious and healthy in numerous ways!

Blueberries

Blueberries are one of the most delicious and enriching foods on the list. They decrease oxidative stress, work as an anti-inflammatory and improve communication among brain cells.

Blueberries aid memory and prevent short-term memory loss.

Try adding them to a dessert, or your breakfast. Healthy food doesn't have to be boring!

Kale

Kale is widely regarded as a superfood, it contains many vitamins, antioxidants, minerals and glucosinolates which have all been shown to benefit the brain. This is one of the best all-rounders and ticks so many boxes when we talk about general health. There are plenty of delicious recipes that will make it easy for you to work it into your diet.

Turmeric

Turmeric is one of the most talked about health foods. Traditionally used in curry and as a spice it has been shown to dramatically improve memory and assist in the production of new brain cells; it can also help reduce stress and combat depression. You can find plenty of interesting ways to use it online and it is one of the most adaptable spices due to its subtle flavour.

The accelerated rhythm of our stressful lives seems to be one of the origins of our unhealthy habits. The increased consumption of fast foods, takeaway foods, baked goods and sandwiches (whose inventor, [John Montagu](#), created as an alternative to a quick meal) are leading to health problems and obesity.

There are many 'brain foods' that didn't make the list, but are both beneficial and tasty. Peanuts, broccoli, whole grains, soy products, eggs and green tea have all been shown [to improve brain function](#) and health. Supplements are also available which will give you exactly the vitamins and minerals your brain requires and are a quick and easy way of obtaining these. Don't think twice, eat healthily, it's a no brainer!

Photo:  **Caroline Attwood**

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