

Second Helping

A Few More Things You Might Find Helpful from United Way Meals on Wheels

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Brain Food Is Smart Food

It Can Help You Stay Sharp and May Even Boost Your Memory

The brain requires certain nutrients to stay healthy. Omega-3 fatty acids, for example, help build and repair brain cells; and antioxidants reduce inflammation, which is linked to brain aging and disorders, such as Alzheimer's disease. Here are some of the best "brain foods" that can help improve your focus and memory. They're smart additions to your regular diet.

▪ **Oily Fish**

Salmon, tuna, mackerel, herring and sardines are all high in omega-3s that improve the structure of brain cells and increase blood flow. That helps you think more clearly.

▪ **Cruciferous Vegetables**

Broccoli, cauliflower, turnips, kale and cabbage are high in antioxidants and compounds that reduce oxidative stress in the brain and may lessen the occurrence of memory loss.

▪ **Berries**

Many types of berries are also a source of antioxidants that reduce inflammation, improve communication between brain cells, help the brain adapt to new situations and reduce or delay the brain's decline. Blueberries, blackberries and strawberries are some of the best.

▪ **Nuts and Seeds**

Nuts and seeds are rich in both omega-3 and antioxidants, including vitamin E which can be especially helpful in reducing stress on brain cells and improving cognition as we age. You can get a good dose of vitamin E with almonds, sunflower seeds or hazelnuts.

▪ **Whole Grains**

High-fiber, low-fat whole-grain foods are another good way to put more vitamin E into your diet. Smart choices include whole-wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice and whole-grain pasta.

▪ **Coffee**

Known for helping you concentrate and stay alert, coffee may also boost the brain's ability to process information. Studies show it may even help prevent strokes and Parkinson's disease.

▪ **Avocados**

Avocados contain healthy UNSaturated fats that can reduce blood pressure. Since high blood pressure is linked to cognitive decline, avocados may help reverse that trend and keep you sharper.

Questions for Meals on Wheels? Call us at 205.592.0413.

Source: medicalnewstoday.com

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