

Nutrition and Brain Health



The MIND diet, a cross between interventions from the Mediterranean and DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension) diets, has been shown to reduce risk of developing dementia and loss of brain function as you age.

Brain Diet Food Facts:

1. Rich in phytochemicals, which are plant substances that have an overall helpful effect on our health.
2. Loaded with antioxidants, which inhibit oxidation and free radical damage in our body. The brain is especially vulnerable to this type of damage.
3. Contain anti-inflammatory substances and omega-3 fatty acids to help reduce LDL (bad) cholesterol and raise HDL (good) cholesterol.

Brain Building Foods:

These foods can actually help fuel your brain and keep your memory sharp.

- ✓ Blueberries, berries and cherries; fresh, frozen and dried
- ✓ Cold pressed extra-virgin olive oil
- ✓ Dark chocolate, cocoa or cacao nibs can increase levels of serotonin, your “feel good” hormone in the brain, which can help improve mood.
- ✓ Dark leafy greens; spinach, kale and collards
- ✓ Garlic
- ✓ Ginger
- ✓ Rosemary
- ✓ Tea
- ✓ Turmeric (spice found in curry)
- ✓ Tuna (look for low mercury), bluefin, herring, mackerel and salmon
- ✓ Walnuts and other nuts, seeds
- ✓ Whole wheat, whole grains (quinoa, barley, farro, wheat berries), oats and brown rice
- ✓ Beans/legumes (e.g., lentils, black beans, refried beans, chickpeas, navy beans, kidney beans)



This information is not intended as a substitute for professional medical care. Always follow your health care provider's instructions.



MIND Diet:

Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay

MIND Daily Checklist (at a minimum)		
What	Serving Size	How
Whole Grains: 3 Servings	1 slice of whole grain bread ½ cup of cooked oatmeal ½ cup of cooked pasta	<input type="checkbox"/> Brown rice or whole wheat couscous with red peppers and crushed garlic. Top with diced avocados. <input type="checkbox"/> Oatmeal with ground flaxseed and blueberries.
Non-Starchy Vegetables: 1 salad and 1 other vegetable	1 cup of leafy greens 1 cup of raw vegetables ½ cup cooked vegetables	<input type="checkbox"/> Romaine lettuce with cucumber and tomatoes. <input type="checkbox"/> Arugula and spinach salad with an olive oil vinaigrette.
Red Wine: 1 glass	5 oz. of red wine	<input type="checkbox"/> Have a glass with a meal.
Nuts/Seeds Every day	1-½ ounces nuts 2 Tbsp. nut butter 2 Tbsp. seeds	<input type="checkbox"/> Trail mix with dried blueberries and mixed nuts.
Legumes At least every other day	¼ cup of cooked beans ¼ cup of cooked peas (chickpeas, lentils, split peas) ¼ cup of tofu	<input type="checkbox"/> Avocado, spinach and hummus rolled in a whole grain wrap. <input type="checkbox"/> Bean or lentil soup.
Olive Oil (cold pressed, extra-virgin)	1 Tbsp.	<input type="checkbox"/> Use oil-based dressings and cook with olive oil instead of butter.
MIND Weekly Checklist		
Poultry: 2x/week	3 oz. of chicken or turkey	<input type="checkbox"/> Bake, broil or cook chicken ahead in a slow cooker for shredded chicken to easily add to salads and other dishes.
Fish: At least 1x/week	3-4 ounces wild salmon, mackerel, albacore tuna, sardines, farmed trout	<input type="checkbox"/> Alaskan salmon, steamed or sautéed broccoli/cauliflower with slivered almonds and quinoa
Berries: At least 2x/week	½ cup whole, halved or sliced, fresh or frozen	<input type="checkbox"/> Strawberries, blueberries, raspberries or blackberries
Cheese, Red Meat, Fried Food, Fast Food	Less than 1 serving each per week	<input type="checkbox"/> Keep fried foods, cheese, red meat and fast foods to a minimum.
MIND-Ful Spices		
<input type="checkbox"/> Curcumin (Turmeric): use in curry dishes, marinades and salad dressings and in hot tea and smoothies <input type="checkbox"/> Garlic: use in Mediterranean dishes, marinades, dressings and soups <input type="checkbox"/> Ginger: use in Asian dishes, dressings, marinades, desserts and infused water <input type="checkbox"/> Rosemary: use in meat and potato dishes; good on squash or mushrooms		

References: Today's Dietitian, Rush University