

FOOD AND HABITS FOR A BETTER MOOD

NOTE: Please consult with health professionals before taking supplements or follow a specific diet.

1. MENTAL HEALTH AS A GOAL

Our food intake and habits impact greatly on our mental health. Setting a goal to improve mental health will help us to live a happier and independent life into old age. Eating healthy reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety. It also improves cognitive functioning.

2. SALT

Common Table Salt	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raises blood pressure• Heated to extreme temps• Causes water retention• Consumption leads to cellulite, rheumatism, arthritis, gout, kidney & gall stones	 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Depleted of essential minerals• Anti-caking compounds added such as aluminum hydroxide• Highly processed• Void of any nutritional value• Refined with chemicals
VS	
 Pink Himalayan Salt <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Source of 84 essential minerals• Good source of magnesium• Promotes healthy PH levels• Obtained from deep in the mountains• Helps regulate blood sugar levels• Helps regulate natural sleep cycle• Balances electrolytes• Promotes sinus health• Helps muscle cramps• Stimulates digestive organs• Easy to digest and assimilate• Pure & free of chemicals	 Sea Salt <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offers trace amounts of magnesium, potassium, zinc & calcium• Minerals readily used by body• Obtained by evaporating seawater under the sun• Helps regulate natural sleep cycle• Be careful when purchasing sea salt to ensure it has not been refined.• Sea salt can be contaminated by environmental pollutants depending on where it was harvested
	

2.1 Salt is made up of sodium chloride. The body needs salt to regulate fluid and muscle function.

Studies suggest high salt intake can lead to high blood pressure, which in turn increases the risk of heart attack, stroke, and kidney disease.

Consuming too little salt may lead to low blood pressure resulting in dizziness, muscle twitches and seizures.

2.2 The common symptoms of too low salt-intake include:

- Loss of energy or fatigue
- Nausea and vomiting
- Headache
- Confusion
- Muscle spasms
- Low blood pressure
- Dark scanty urine
- Irritability, disorientation and neurological manifestations
- Convulsions

3. **VEGETABLES (Resource: https://youtu.be/luEXCyRqeWU?si=dv_-SdlyH_9pUVfX)**

Lettuce – high in fiber and nutrients

Bellpepper – high in Vit C, low carbs.

Broccoli (lower on pesticide sprays). Lots of nutrients. Low carbs.

Cauliflower (lower on pesticide sprays). Lots of vitamins and minerals. High in Potassium. Low carbs.

Mushrooms (lower on pesticide sprays)

Cabbage (lower on pesticide sprays and cheaper). High in Vit C and fiber.

Eggplant (lower on pesticide sprays)

Asparagus (lower on pesticide sprays)

Celery (high on pesticide sprays – buy organic)

Spinach (high on pesticide sprays – buy organic)

Kale (high on pesticide sprays – buy organic)

Tomatoes (high on pesticide sprays – buy organic)

Brussels sprouts

Green Beans

Parsley

Radishes

Garlic and Onions (prior-soaked)

4. **Top Fruits (Resource: <https://www.beefreegf.com>)**

4.1 Blueberries

Blueberries are loaded with vitamins and nutrients, including antioxidants. The blueberry has a particular combination of nutrients known for helping the memory in particular. It boosts memory and protect the brain from future memory lapses.

4.2 Raspberries

The raspberry has a particular blend of nutrients that help keep the brain healthy and high-functioning. Raspberries fight inflammation of the neurons, protecting against neurological damage in the brain.

4.3 Strawberries

The antioxidants in strawberries, like those in other berry super-fruits, have a unique and important role in brain health. These antioxidants tend to fight off free radicals, which damage cells and can lead to memory loss and other brain difficulties.

4.4 Blackcurrants

Blackcurrants have the capacity for boosting brain health. This simple fruit actually helps in ways similar to drugs used to treat brain-relate conditions like Parkinson's disease. The powerful fruit is known in particular for reducing mental fatigue, energizing the brain to think more clearly and faster.

4.5 Grapes

The blood and the brain have a very close relationship. Grapes, by improving certain types of cardiovascular function, can also help improve brain function. Scientists are finding that grapes can contribute to greater vascular flexibility, less clotting, and better blood flow. All of these can increase the blood (and subsequent oxygen supply) to the brain. With more to power it, the brain tends to be healthier.

4.6 Avocado (lower on pesticide sprays).

Packed with other nutrients as well, avocados ultimately help the brain by:

- Increasing blood supply
- Improving oxygenation in the blood

- Enhancing brain signals to the muscles
- Lowering blood pressure
- Preventing stroke
- Reducing seizure activity

Through its healthy fatty acids and other nutrients, avocados prove to be one of the best superfruits for the brain overall.

4.7 Cherries

Free radicals are damaging to cells, causing plenty of deterioration in the body, including in the brain, over time. Cherries help reduce inflammation, including in and around the brain. As a result, cherries are sort of like anti-aging powerhouses for the brain.

4.8 Bananas

Bananas are rich in potassium and magnesium, it gives the brain energy and help sharpen the brain's focus, increasing the ability to pay attention and learn. Bananas also offer vitamins and nutrients that improve cognitive function overall. Truly a super-fruit for the brain, bananas also help improve and regulate mood, which is controlled centrally in the brain.

4.9 Kiwi

Helps the brain regulate and improve mood. This can have a significant impact on a person's outlook and perspective on life as well as their overall quality of life. It can be particularly helpful in those with mood disorders.

Kiwi is also thought to help prevent some brain disorders. The risk of Alzheimer's Disease can be reduced by kiwi consumption, for instance. Since it also offers health benefits like fighting infections, kiwi helps keep the whole body healthy, too.

Improves bone density and sleep.

5. Meats

Fish and poultry

Salmon, mackerel, tuna, herring, chicken, turkey, lamb, lean beef – buy meats and poultry that are grass-fed, free range, hormone free and antibiotic free.

6. Eggs – organic

7. Saffron (resource- <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>)

One of the most established findings regarding the benefits of saffron is its antidepressant activity. There are clinical trials conducted, evaluating the efficacy of saffron in mild-to-moderate depression. The studies reported that saffron was more effective than placebo and at least equivalent to the therapeutic doses of imipramine and fluoxetine.

8. Other good foods:

- Non-gluten whole grains - Oats, buckwheat and millet
- Cinnamon
- Walnuts
- Adaptogenic herbs (helps with stress, pain, fibromyalgia, sleep problems) and foods like Ashwagandha, Schisandra fruit, Turmeric, Rhodiola, Moringa
- Resveratrol (antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, lowers cholesterol, helps against multiple sclerosis, dementia and Alzheimer) – grapes, blueberries, cranberries, peanuts.
- Chia seeds
- Flax seeds
- Pumpkin seeds
- Coconut products
- Condiments for dipping (hummus, guacamole, salsa)
- Health oils (coconut oil, almond oil, macadamia-nut oil)
- Nut butters and spreads (almond and coconut butter)
- Pure wrap coconut wraps
- Quinoa

9. Top 3 herbs for brain health

Ashwaganda: Helps the body cope with stress. Helps to control mediators of stress, including cortisol. It helps the body with regulation of stress response. Reduce anxiety and help with better sleep.

Ginko Biloba: Improved thinking and memory. Better social behaviour. Better ability to perform everyday tasks. Helps in

treating Alzheimer. Reduce anxiety. Improve vision of people with glaucoma.

Bacopa Monnier: Enhancing memory and cognitive function. Reducing stress and anxiety.

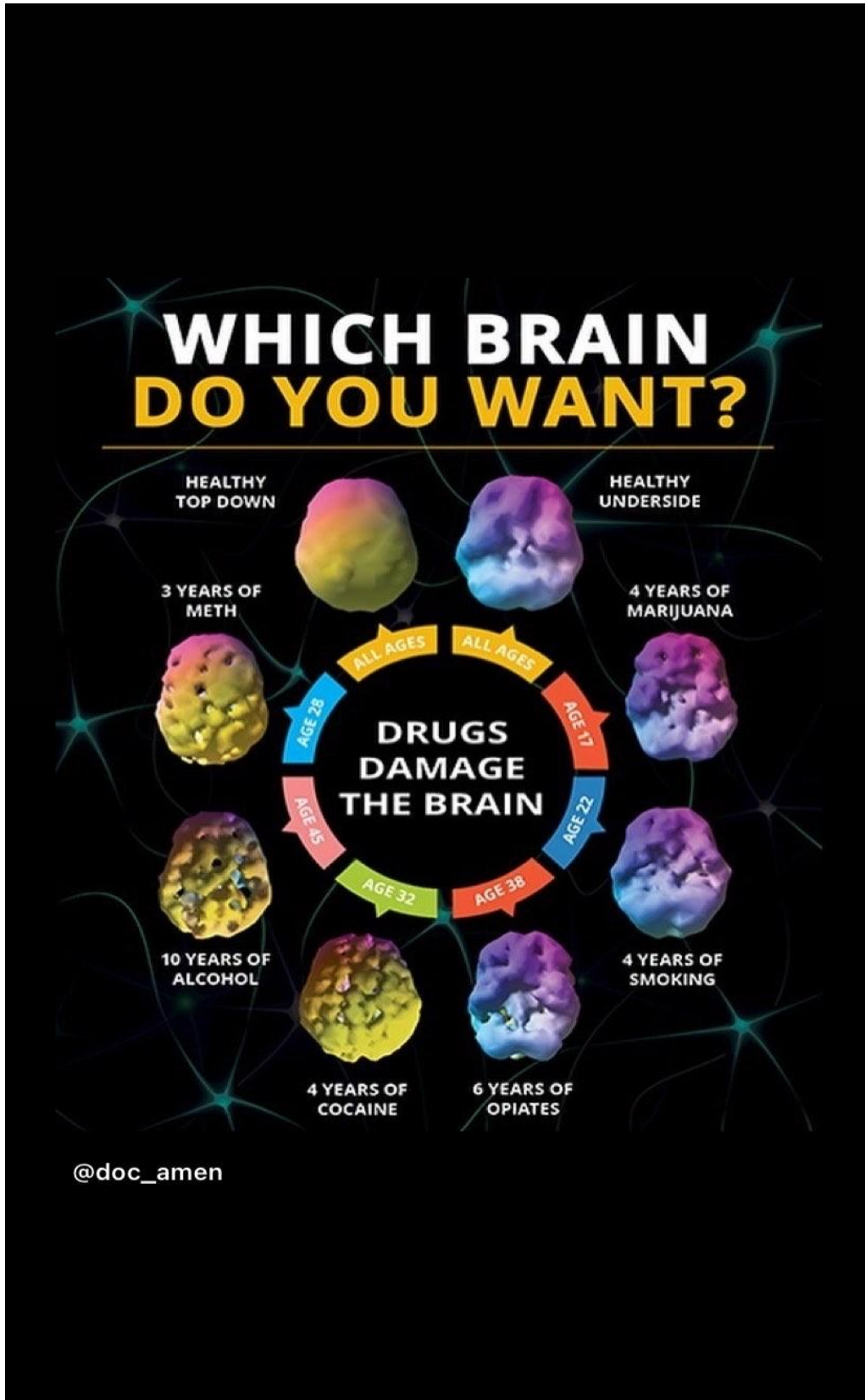
10. Supplements (resource: futureyouhealth.com)

Micronutrient supplementation can help prevent micronutrient deficiencies in those at risk and may help maintain cognitive performance, including memory, concentration, learning and reasoning.

Supplements designed for brain health typically contain all the necessary micronutrients to help support a healthy brain, cognition and mental performance. It is incredibly hard to get all the vital nutrients we need to support good brain health from diet alone, so a highly-absorbable supplement developed specifically for brain and cognition, is a good option for many people.

- **Omega 3 DHA and EPA fatty acids** contribute to the normal functioning of our brain, essential for brain health. It is unusual to have an allergic reaction to omega-3 themselves but not to the food that contain them. People with the risk of atrial fibrillation or heart disease must be careful to take high doses of Omega 3 supplements.
- Pantothenic acid also known as vitamin B5, is a very important B vitamin scientifically proven to contribute to the mental performance of the brain including **concentration, learning, memory and reasoning**.
- **Together, iron, zinc and iodine** support our overall brain health contributing to cognitive function and iodine specifically plays a key role in ensuring the nervous system is functioning normally.
- **Iron and Vitamin C** on an ongoing basis, new red blood cells need to be reformed continually, together with synthesis of haemoglobin as these two blood constituents are essential in transporting oxygen throughout the body, especially the brain. Vitamin C also plays a secondary role within this process aiding the absorption of iron.
- **Vitamin C, Thiamine, Niacin, Vitamin B6, 12 and Folic acid**, the combination of these nutrients contributes to a normal psychological function and a healthy nervous system.
- **B6, B12 and Folate** - The three essential B vitamins contribute to both new blood cell formation and healthy homocysteine levels within the blood. High levels of this toxic homocysteine are associated with cardiovascular disease later in life and therefore levels need to be controlled. Many older adults fail to absorb enough B12 from food due to low stomach acid and due to the use of some acid depleting medications.

- **L-Methyl Folate** - Many older adults cannot metabolize folic acid from their normal diet due to a common genetic polymorphism, associated with the MTHFR gene. For metabolism to occur fully, our bodies need L-Methyl Folate.
- **Magnesium** - Electrolyte balance within the body is critical to overall mental status and magnesium has been proven to play a key role in its contribution to a healthy electrolyte balance within the brain. Magnesium also plays a role in ensuring a normal psychological function too. A deficiency in magnesium in older adults can result in cognitive difficulties, such as brain fog, memory problems and difficulties concentrating. Low magnesium can leave you feeling anxious, stressed and irritable. Low magnesium can result in mood disorders, including anxiety, depression and confusion.
- **Acetyl Carnitine and Acetyl Cysteine** - Acetyl carnitine and acetyl cysteine are both cutting edge nutrients that have been the subject of research over many years, in their application in various aspects of brain health due to their antioxidant characteristics.
- **Selenium, Vitamin E and Polyphenols** - Every cell in our body is under constant attack by free radicals, producing oxidative stress. Selenium and vitamin E are needed to help protect our cells against this ongoing damaging oxidation, together with a selection of additional antioxidants such as green tea, grape seed, resveratrol and alpha-lipoic acid.
- **Vitamin D**



11. Risk factors to brain health
- Alcohol
 - Drugs
 - Smoking

- Marijuana – it stays 30 days in your system
- Concussions (sport injuries)
- Head injuries
- Sex addictions (Pornography)
- **Emotional trauma and loss** – When we love someone, they come to live in the emotional or limbic center of our brains. They occupy nerve cell pathways and physical live in the neurons and synapses of the brain. When we lose people, our brain gets confused and disorientated. Since the person lives in the neuronal connections, we expect to see them, hear them, feel them, and touch them. When we can't hold them or talk to them as we usually do, the brain centers where they live become inflamed searching for them. Overactivity in the limbic system – the brain's emotional centers – has been associated with depression and low serotonin levels, which is why we have trouble sleeping, feel obsessed, lose our appetites, want to isolate ourselves, and lose the joy we have for live. A deficit in endorphins, which modulate pain and pleasure pathways in the brain, also occurs, which may be responsible for physical pain we feel. Basically, we become a neurochemical mess.
- Exposure to solvents, pesticides, ..
- Mold
- Viruses
- Electromagnetic fields (power lines, cellphone use)
- Sleep apnea
- Noise can damage the delicate nerve endings that transfer the electrical information from the hair cells inside your ear to your brain, potentially causing inflammatory reactions within the brain itself.
- Covid – 19 inflammation: Oxygen therapy, Curcumins (Tumeric), Omega 3, Vit D, Quercetin (Found in foods like berries, apples, green tea).
- Cholesterol – food to combat it: Almonds, Olive Oil, Asparagus, Oatmeal, Pinto Beans, Blueberries, tomatoes, Avocados, Dark chocolate, Barley and Eggplant.
- **Watch out for automatic negative thoughts** – you don't have to believe everything that comes up in your head. Challenge your thoughts and write them down.

12. Unhealthy foods, drinks and products for your brain

- Alcohol
- Too much caffeine
- Processed foods (Deli meats, cookies, chips, fried foods..)

- Gluten (wheat, barley, rye). Gluten decrease activity in the Cerebellum making you less “sharp”. The Cerebellum is responsible for coordination, emotions, learning, memory ...
- Energy drinks
- All foods that contain high fructose corn syrup, sugar, artificial sweeteners, soy, trans fat, and hydrogenated and partially hydrogenated fat.
- Vegetable oils such as corn oil, canola oil and soy-based oils.
- Cereal and grain-based foods
- Bread, pasta
- Fruit juice – it causes unhealthy blood sugar spikes
- Lipstick – some lipsticks contain lead.
- Red 40 – in foods such as Doritos, M&M’s..
- Instant Noodles: Contains high amounts of THBQ, contains monosodium glutamate, which is linked to obesity, various degrees of brain damage and dysfunction, and potentially trigger Parkinson’s disease, Alzheimer’s and chronic inflammation.

13. SLEEP

- Between 22:00 and 2:00 we produce the highest amount of melatonin. Melatonin influence HGH secretion which helps with your body burning fat, repair collagen, regenerate body tissue, improve bone density, enhance immunity, and repair cells.
- Sleep is essential for many cognitive functions such as memory consolidation, neuroplasticity, toxin removal and emotional health.
- Lack of sleep may also affect our psychomotor performance (slow reaction time) and put us at risk of Alzheimer’s.
- Lack of sleep can also be associated with diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases and impaired immunity. Sleep will affect your brain health.

Improving sleep

- No bright light or screentime between 23:00 and 4:00.
- No caffeine, alcohol and nicotine.
- Alcohol use leads to non-healthy sleep patterns.
- Eat 2 kiwifruits 1 hour before bedtime.
- Turn your bedroom into a sleep-inducing environment.
- Establish a soothing pre-sleep routine.
- Keep your internal clock set with a consistent sleep schedule.

- Lighten up on evening meals.
- Balance fluid Intake
- Exercise early
- Before going to bed reflect on everything that went well that day.

14. INSULIN AND LIFESTYLE

Insulin is a hormone acting as “body messengers” that communicate and respond to everything from hunger signals to emotions and more. Its major responsibility is to help regulate blood sugar.

Insulin is produced in the pancreas. When you eat foods that contain any form of sugar, that sugar gets broken down into glucose.

Examples of foods that will get broken down into glucose: ice cream, cookies, cakes, sweets, pies, dried fruit, soda, juices, bread, pasta, crackers, cereals...

Those foods, once simplified into glucose molecules (blood sugar) are then escorted *by* insulin to the liver and muscle cells where they are stored for later use as a form of energy (down the line). This stored form of glucose is called glycogen. Provided everything on the inside is functioning the way it was designed to function, that is how this works. However, if you overly consume those foods that break down into glucose (whether they be “healthy” or not) you can accidentally put yourself into a state of **insulin resistance**. Insulin resistance isn’t a disease; it’s more a state of being in which insulin and glucose no longer maintain that working relationship.

How does this happen? When you frequently eat too much sugar or too many carbs for *your* unique body to handle, your body in a sense becomes desensitized to it.

The cycle that creates insulin resistances aka “The Dopamine Trap” goes something like this:

Eat too Much Sugar/Carbs → leads to → Chronically elevated levels of insulin → leads to → Elevated levels of serotonin → leads to → Elevated levels of dopamine (*creating a sensation of temporary pleasure*) → leads to → Sugar cravings + carb cravings + wild blood sugar highs and lows.

You repeat this cycle over and over and over again.

But it doesn’t end there. As you continually seek to fulfill those cravings and receive peaks of temporary pleasure, the amount of sugar and carbohydrate you need in order to fulfill those demands increases.

Your body will eventually reach its threshold for dealing with all of this, which is the point at which insulin resists working as it's normally supposed to and insulin resistance follows.

Insulin resistance can lead to diabetes, heart disease, mental health problems and other health problems if left untreated.

Changes to improve your insulin sensitivity:

Cut down on: carbs, trans fat foods (pies, fries, doughnuts and foods with added sugars).

Add to your diet: turmeric, garlic, ginger, cinnamon and green tea.

15. HYPERTENSION (Resource: <https://www.aavante.com/>)

Hypertension or high blood pressure is a condition in which the pressure of your blood against the walls of arteries is so high that it gives rise to various health problems.

Furthermore, there are multiple stages of high blood pressure. A blood pressure reading of 120 over 80 (120/80) is studied as normal BP.

Moreover, the other ranges of hypertension are:

#1. Elevated HBP: 120-129 / less than 80

#2. Stage 1 HBP: 130 over 80 / 139 over 89

#3. Stage 2 HBP: 140 and above / 90 and above

#4. Hypertension Crisis: 180 and above /120 and above

It is ordinarily known that a consistent rise in blood pressure damages your blood vessels over time.

However, many don't know that the same can influence your mental health as well.

Connections between high blood pressure and mental health and how it puts your emotional health at risk:

- If left untreated, hypertension can increase the discharge of stress-related hormones in the blood.

And what's worse is high stress eventually leads to hypertension. There exist a two-way relationship between elevated stress and hypertension affects your mental health severely.

- By interfering with your mood-regulating chemicals, the chronic inflammatory chemicals can cause an imbalance in your mental health.
- It's a widely known fact that hypertension gives rise to frequent and acute aggressive behaviour.
- It has been found that people who were oblivious of their condition of hypertension have shown signs of anxiety and restlessness.

- As per a study, the condition of high blood pressure in mid-life (40-64 years) can lead to dementia later on in life. To clarify, high blood pressure leads to narrower arteries affecting the flow of blood in the brain. Low blood flow to the brain causes a lack of nutrients and oxygen which eventually damages the brain cells. Vascular dementia has been found in people who have had hypertension in their mid-life. This condition is the consequence of low blood flow in the brain.

Changes one can make to improve blood pressure

- Reduce stressors
- Stress management
- Eat more fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy foods
- Cut back on foods that are High in saturated fat, cholesterol, and trans fats
- Eat more fish, poultry, and nuts.
- Foods to cut down on:
 - Salty and sugary foods
 - Caffeine and alcohol
 - Red meats

16. Exercise increases blood flow and tends to counter some of the natural reduction in brain connections that occur during aging, in effect reversing some of the problems.

17. Stay mentally active

18. Relaxation and meditation offer a bunch of benefits for the entire body: It improves brain function and boost mood, combats stress and anxiety, lowers cortisol levels, increase blood flow to the brain and activates the brain's prefrontal cortex (the part that is associated with judgment and impulse control).

19. Pain management

Minimize pain medication by practicing alternative ways of pain management such as:

- Body posture
- Exercises to strengthen muscles and relieve pain
- Avoid unnecessary pressure on joints
- Avoid food and drinks which increase pain or inflammation
- Monitor pain
- Use alternative creams, supplements and food to assist with pain management
- Heat and cold packs

20. MY FOCUS

- What I am thinking, conversations with myself and others as well as my everyday habits and attitude can determine the quality of my life and my peace.
- What we choose to focus upon, can do more than change your brain. **You can damage it**, especially if you choose to focus on something that makes you frightened or angry. In psychology, this is called “rumination,” and it is clearly hazardous to your health. In a Stanford brain-scan study, people who focused on negative aspects of themselves, or on a negative interpretation of life, had increased activity in their amygdala. This generated waves of fear, releasing a torrent of destructive neurochemicals into the brain.
- Meditation can delay aging according to research studies. “Meditation doesn’t just improve mental and physical health in the present; it also slows the aging process and can help meditators stay mentally sharp into old age. Once people reach their mid- to late 20s, their brains begin to lose volume and weight, which can eventually result in the loss of some functional ability. But when researchers from UCLA compared brain scans of 50 people who meditated for at least four years with scans of 50 people who didn’t, they found that those who engaged in the practice had smaller reductions in gray matter—the neuron-containing tissue responsible for processing information. “What we expected was to see this in just a few small regions,” Dr. Florian Kuth, the study’s co-author, tells HuffingtonPost.com. “But what we saw was almost the entire brain. That was a big surprise.” Meditation would appear to be a powerful tool for reducing the risks for age-related cognitive decline and neurodegenerative disorders, such as Alzheimer’s disease.
- The renewing of our mind a concept neuroscience now knows as neuroplasticity.
- This is why we believe that meditation will help maintain dendrite function: It lowers the overall levels of stress while simultaneously stimulating cognitive alertness. In fact, evidence now suggests the more you exercise your brain, the more you can slow dendrite deterioration, and thus preserve your memory and cognitive skills.

Questions to ask yourself everyday

- What am I feeling right now?
- What is taking up the majority of my mental space right now?
- How will I move my body today for at least 20 min?
- Who can I socialize with to lift my mood?
- What will I do today to feed my soul?
- What time do I need to sleep so I can get 8 hours of sleep?
- How is the food I am eating helping me?

Other tips

- Follow doc_amen on Instagram about brain health and shieldmentalhealth
- Wake-up and say “today will be a good day”
- Pay attention to micro-moments of happiness in your life
- Express gratitude
- Perform random acts of kindness
- Focus on your strengths
- Compliment yourself
- Review what went right during your day
- Take a break from gadgets
- Affirmations

List your 10 day challenge by naming the changes in terms of food, drinks, attitude and habits:

FOOD		DRINKS		HABITS	
YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO

RECIPES

Saffron is safe to use in general but pregnant women should avoid high volumes.

Benefits of Saffron:

- Antidepressant properties
- Protect brain cells against progressive damage
- Anti-inflammatory
- Aid weight loss
- Helps with PMS
- Saffron has aphrodisiac properties for men and women and helps with the side affects of antidepressants.
- Lower risk for heart disease
- Improve blood sugar levels, eyesight and memory.

1. Saffron Chicken

INGREDIENTS

- □ whole chicken bone-in, skin-on

- □ 1 teaspoon Advieh Persian spice mix or combine ground coriander and cumin.
- □ $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper freshly ground, plus extra
- □ 1 tablespoon salt divided
- □ 3 large yellow onions 1 for marinade, 1 peeled and quartered, 1 sliced thick
- □ 6 cloves garlic halved
- □ 2 tablespoons lemon juice plus more for serving
- □ 2 tablespoons olive oil plus more for drizzling
- □ 1 teaspoon saffron ground and dissolved in 2 tablespoons hot water
- □ 2 tablespoons melted butter
- □ 1 organic lemon quartered
- □ 2 bay leaves

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat the oven to 180°. Lightly grease a roasting pan. Place the rack in the middle.
2. Make the meat dry with paper towels.
3. In a small bowl, combine the Advieh spice mix (or ground coriander and cumin), black pepper, and 2 teaspoons salt. Sprinkle this mixture inside and outside the meat, rubbing it well.
4. In a food processor, grind 1 onion, half the garlic and lemon juice. Strain the mixture. Add olive oil, saffron water and $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt.
5. Drizzle about two-thirds of the onion-saffron marinade inside and outside the chicken, under the skin, and spread it evenly. Reserve the remaining marinade for later. Place the chicken in a deep dish so that it is submerged in the marinade. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
6. Remove the meat from the fridge 30 minutes before cooking. Drizzle melted butter inside, outside, and under the chicken's skin. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
7. Pour half of the remaining saffron marinade inside the chicken cavity and over the chicken. Stuff the cavity with quartered onion, garlic, lemon, and bay leaves. Tie the drumstick ends with string and tuck the wing tips under the chicken.
8. Place the chicken breast-side up on a bed of thick onion slices in a baking tray or roasting pan. Pour some marinade around the chicken.

9. Transfer the chicken to the oven and roast for 1 hour and 30 minutes, or until the juices run clear when pierced at the join between the drumstick and the body. Baste the chicken twice, spooning the pan juices over the skin at 30 minutes and 1 hour.
10. Let the chicken rest for 15 minutes without covering it to prevent the skin from becoming wet. Serve the saffron chicken with the pan juices. Enjoy!

ADVIEH INGREDIENTS: HEALTH BENEFITS

The common ingredients include cardamom, cumin, cinnamon, dried rose petals, coriander, black pepper, turmeric, dried limes, cloves and such. As with any spice blend, there are many regional variations. Some that include caraway seeds, nutmeg, star anise, angelica (golpar in Persian) etc.

Apart from enhancing the taste of recipes, spices come with a lot of health benefits. They are often *rich sources of antioxidants, polyphenols and other phytonutrients* that have health promoting properties.

Cardamom: This sweet and fragrant spice has been credited for improving digestion and circulation, lowering blood pressure, fighting inflammation. Cardamom also provides some vitamins and minerals.

Cumin: This spice is popular in traditional medicine for its aid in digestion. It is known to also possess anti-oxidant, anti-inflammatory, and carminative properties.

Cinnamon: Cinnamon is obtained from the bark of a tropical tree and is considered to have one of the highest antioxidant values for a spice. The spice has been shown to reduce inflammation and blood triglyceride levels. It is well known for lowering blood sugar by increasing sensitivity to insulin.

Dried Rose Petals: The rose petals used for culinary purposes in Persian cuisine are obtained from a wild variety of rose. Rose petals are used in savory dishes too and lend a fragrant floral note that combines well with the other warm spices in advieh. They are also rich with phytochemicals.

Black Pepper: Black pepper is supposed to have anti-inflammatory, carminative, digestive, cardioprotective and anti-oxidant properties.

Turmeric: Perhaps the most popular for its health benefits, turmeric contains many compounds with medicinal properties. Prominent among them is curcumin, which is a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compound and is associated with healing for several disease conditions.

Dried Limes: These are a staple of Persian cooking and have an intense citrus aroma. They are small limes (or lemons) boiled in brine and dried until hard. They are added whole or as a powder to stews, soups, appetizers, rice etc. Dried limes bring along the benefits of citrus.

Cloves: This spice has anti-microbial properties, and is especially known for fighting oral diseases. It has been associated with enhancing the immune system, cancer prevention, and maintenance of bone health.

<https://www.thedeliciouscrescent.com/>

2. Dark Chocolate Mousse

Dark Chocolate 78 mL

Egg Yolks 2

Egg Whites 2

Real Salt 1 pinch

Directions

1. Melt the dark chocolate. Let cool slightly, then mix in the egg yolks. Set aside.
2. In a medium bowl, beat the egg whites and salt on high speed until stiff peaks form.
3. Using a rubber spatula, carefully fold in 1/3 of the whites to the chocolate mixture, followed by the rest.
4. Pour into ramekins and chill for at least an hour.

3. **Scrambled Eggs with Spinach and Feta**

Ingredients

- Half cub of fresh spinach
- 4 large eggs
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 30 ml feta
- Cayenne Pepper/ black pepper
- Himalayan salt

Instructions

1. Roughly chop the spinach into smaller pieces.
2. Crack the eggs into a large bowl, add Himalayan salt, and whisk.
3. Add the butter to a large skillet and melt over medium heat. Add the chopped spinach and cook until the spinach has softened (2-3 minutes).
4. Push the spinach to the outside edges of the skillet and pour the eggs into the center. Gently fold the eggs as the bottom layer solidifies, until the eggs are about 75% solid. Fold the eggs into the spinach, then turn off the heat. The residual heat in the pan will finish cooking the eggs without overcooking or drying them out.
5. Top the eggs with the crumbled feta, a little freshly cracked pepper, and red pepper, then serve.

4. Oatmeal breakfast

In a saucepan, mash a banana and mix it with the oats, milk of choice, and scoop of cocoa powder. The cocoa powder also adds antioxidants and nutrients to the oatmeal.

Bring the oats to a simmer and cook, stirring every so often to avoid burning, until the oats have absorbed all the liquid. It should be creamy smooth and taste rich and delicious.

5. Clearing Brain fog

Walnut crusted maple salmon

Ingredients

- **Salmon:** this is a 454 g salmon. Thick and long piece of salmon.
- **Salt and pepper:** for seasoning.
- **Maple syrup:** added sweetness and
- **Dijon mustard:** a subtle mustard with loads of flavor.
- **Fisher Nuts Walnuts:** crunchy, thick texture that bakes up nicely.

- **Prepare the baking sheet:** Preheat oven to 180° degrees. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray with cooking spray. Lay the salmon skin side down and salt and pepper.
- **Whisk together:** In a small bowl whisk maple syrup and dijon. Spread evenly on top of the salmon.
- **Add walnuts and bake:** Press the walnuts onto the top of the salmon. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until the salmon is lightly browned and flakes easily.

6. Lowering anxiety

Strawberry Caprese Salad

Ingredients: Rocket, Strawberries, Mozzarella, Basil, Balsamic Vinegar, and Honey

Method: Hull and slice the strawberries before putting them in the salad.

Once the strawberries are cleaned, add them to a bowl or a serving platter with the arugula, fresh mozzarella and basil. Gently toss the ingredients together.

To make the dressing: Whisk the honey and balsamic vinegar together in a small saucepan.
Cook over medium low heat until the dressing reduces by a third and coats the back of a spoon.

7. Mood enhancer

Chia pudding:

- 1 cup unsweetened vanilla almond milk
- □ 6 Tablespoons chia seeds
- □ 1/4 cup honey
- □ 2 Tablespoons cocoa powder
- □ 1/8 teaspoon salt
- □ 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- □ toppings of choice: fresh berries, chocolate chips, nuts.

INSTRUCTIONS

- Add almond milk, chia seeds, honey, cocoa powder, vanilla and salt into a high-powered blender. Start at a low setting on your blender and progress to high. Blend until chia seeds are almost undetectable and mixture is smooth, scraping down the sides of the blender with a spatula if needed.
- Chia pudding should be thick and ready to enjoy so you can top with your favorite toppings and dive in or if you like your chocolate pudding cold, transfer to a resealable container, cover and refrigerate for 3-4 hours to chill before eating.

8. Brain Power Smoothie (Blueberry Avocado Smoothie)

Ingredients:

- Blueberries
- Avocado
- Banana
- Chia seeds
- Pomegranate juice
- Ice

Instructions:

1. Place all ingredients in blender.
2. Blend until smooth.

9. Sweet potatoes

How to Bake Sweet Potatoes

1. Preheat the oven to 180 ° and line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil.
2. Use a fork to poke holes into the sweet potatoes, and set them on the baking sheet.
3. Roast for 40 to 50 minutes, or until the skin has puffed up and you can easily pierce them with a fork. **Resources**



Depression Meals: 9 Restorative Recipes for Any Time of Day (psychcentral.com)

