



Protect your brain with nutrition and supplements

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The brain is the control centre of the body, and it needs to be taken care of.

When considering health, a lot of people automatically focus on their bodies first. However, it's safe to say that our brain needs just as much (if not the most) attention, considering the fact that it is basically the computer that controls all the body's functions.

From a holistic health perspective, there are various ways that you can support your brain health. Adequate sleep, deep breathing and meditation, regular exercise and eating a wholesome diet are just a few. And it's important to remember that you need to be considering all these aspects to create a lifestyle that truly supports your brain.

While there are many aspects of health to consider, in this article we're focusing on how Nutrition & Supplements can support your brain health.

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How you can nourish your body and brain with nutritious food.

It's important to remember that there is no miracle food or magic pill that can 'cure' your brain.

After all, cognitive change and decline is a normal process of aging. However, by nourishing your body with good nutrient-dense foods, you can help your brain stay healthier into your old age.

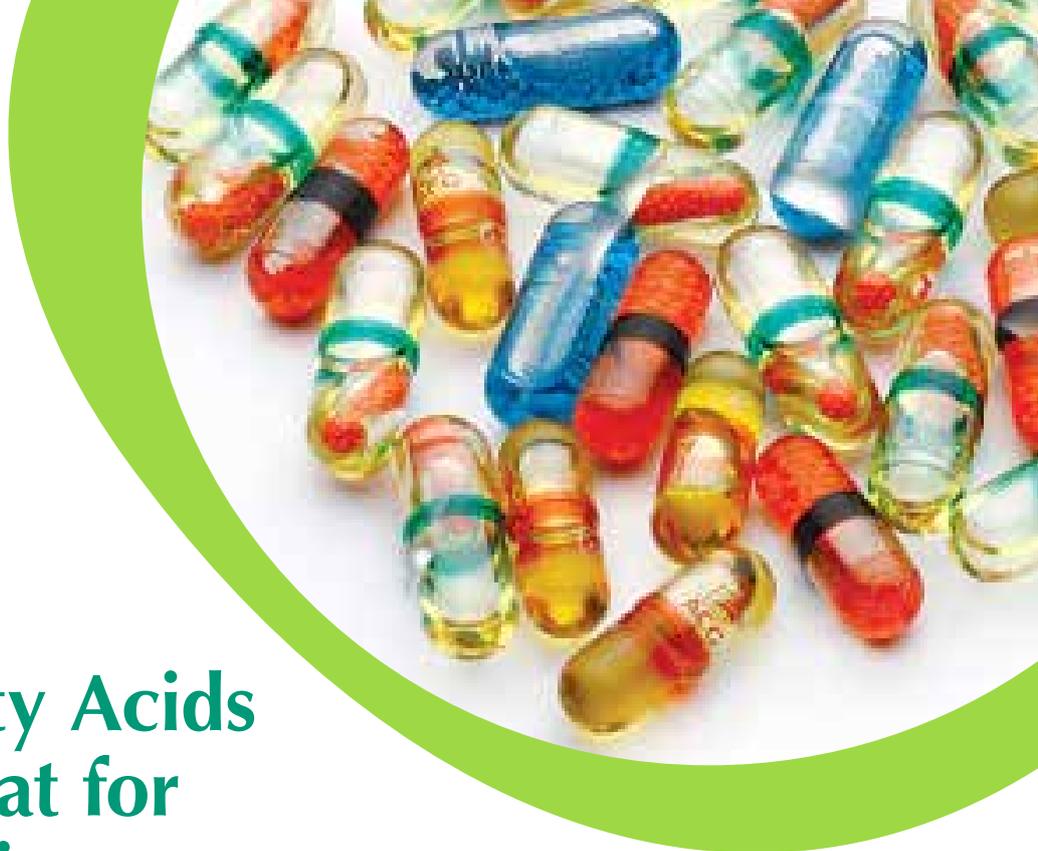
When it comes to what nutrients and foods to eat to support your brain, you can keep it very simple if you prefer. To do this, simply reduce (or completely avoid) processed foods. Instead, focus on eating whole foods like fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, seeds and whole grains, This way you'll be supporting your brain with many essential nutrients it needs.

However, if you want to go deeper, in this article we're looking at 3 specific nutrients that have been shown to be particularly effective in supporting the brain. Alongside we'll also share natural food sources for each, and useful information on supplements.

While all whole natural foods contain valuable nutrients, some are considered to be true brain-boosters. Three specific brain-boosting nutrients we're highlighting in this article are omega-3 fatty acids, B vitamins and antioxidants.

Nutrients, Food Sources & Supplements for the Brain:

While you can support your brain by simply eating a varied diet of whole foods, it is sometimes difficult to meet the body's requirements. This is often because of the quantity of the nutrients in the food, its absorption in the body, or a pre-existing medical condition that may hamper the effectiveness of the nutrient. In such cases, it is critical to supplement the diet along with functional ingredients or nutrients to facilitate the body to work at its optimal potential.



Omega 3 Fatty Acids

An essential fat for body and brain

Omega-3 fatty acids are a type of polyunsaturated fat that is essential to the body. The very fact that it is essential means that the body cannot produce it but requires it through diet and/or supplementation.

Omega-3 fatty acids play many roles in the body and have been shown to support the health of the body and the brain. They are associated with regulating cellular functions, blood pressure, nervous system, glucose tolerance, hematic clotting, and curbing inflammation. They may also help lower triglycerides, relieve symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis, and slow the progression of age-related eye disease.

There are 3 kinds of omega-3 fatty acids - eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), docosahexaenoic acid (DHA)

and alpha-linolenic (ALA). DHA and EPA are mostly found in fish and are biologically active and able to be used directly by the body. ALA is found in plants and needs to be converted into DHA and EPA before the body can use it. However, the conversion of ALA to EPA is approximately 6% whereas ALA to DHA is 3.8% and if your diet is rich in omega-6 fatty acids then this conversion is further reduced by 40% to 50%. Our regular diet is high in omega-6 mainly because of vegetable oils and the quantity we use in cooking.

Therefore DHA and EPA are considered to be the most important forms of omega-3 fatty acids, associated with various health benefits. Recommended daily dose: There are no specific guidelines for omega-3 fatty acids, however, below are the

minimum amounts that a healthy person can consume based on research:

EPA and DHA: 250 to 500 mg combined dosage for healthy adults

ALA: 1.1 g to 1.6 g per day for healthy adults
Higher amounts may be recommended in particular health conditions.

Because your body can't produce Omega 3 Fatty Acids, you need to get them through the food you eat.



Omega 3 Fatty Acids Natural Food Sources

A few natural sources of Omega-3 fatty acids include:

Fatty Fish

Fatty fish are a naturally rich source of omega-3 fatty acids and are considered the best source. Such fish include cod, salmon, anchovies, halibut, herring, mackerel, oysters, sardines, trout, and tuna.

Fortified Food Products:

You can find certain food products that have been fortified with omega-3 fatty acids. Some examples include margarine, milk, or yogurt.

Grains, Nuts and Seeds:

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in nuts and seeds, like walnuts, flaxseed, pumpkin, chia and hemp seeds. You can also find omega-3s in peanut butter, oatmeal and some breads.

Seaweed and Algae:

This is an important source of omega-3s for vegetarians and vegans, as it's one of the few plant-based sources that contains both DHA and EPA. Examples include seaweed, nori, spirulina, and chlorella.

Oils:

Cod liver oil is a great source of DHA and EPA. Other oils can be a good source of ALA like canola, flaxseed, soybean and walnut oil.

How are you including omega-3 fatty acids into your diet?

Omega-3 Fatty Acids Supplements

When considering taking an Omega 3 supplement:

We don't recommend taking a supplement to replace a healthy diet but rather to support an inadequate diet. If you are not a fish-eater or you don't consume the foods listed above on a regular basis (at least 4 to 5 times a week), then you should add a supplement to meet your body's requirements.

Because it is such a valuable nutrient for the body and brain, you will see many supplement brands and it can get overwhelming to know which to choose.

Based on our expertise in creating quality supplements with ingredients like omega-3, here are some tips to help you select a quality product:

Choose an EPA or DHA supplement. This will give you the maximum benefit in a lower dose. Now there are also vegan sources of these nutrients available. If you are still unsure of the source, then opt for a veg ALA option with a higher dosage. You can keep our recommended dosage in mind while choosing your supplement.

Read labels. Check the actual EPA, DHA or ALA content on the label. Even if your omega-3 supplement says 1000 mg, all of it will not be EPA, DHA or ALA.

Consult your doctor. While it is generally safe to take omega-3 supplements, it is important to consult your physician if you are on any form of blood thinners as omega-3s further enhance their action.

Do you take an Omega-3 supplement?

B Vitamins 'B' is for Brain

There are 13 vitamins that the body needs to function optimally, and 8 of them are B vitamins.

These 8 B vitamins include: Thiamin (B1), Riboflavin (B2), Niacin (B3), Pantothenic acid (B5), Pyridoxine (B6), Biotin (B7), Folate/folic acid (B9), and Cyanocobalamin (B12).

All vitamins and minerals play an essential role in supporting the body and brain. However, it's the B vitamins that certainly stand out for their particular role in supporting the brain.

“All the B vitamins - 1,2,3,6,9, and 12 - play an important role in brain health. They may help prevent dementia and boost the production of neurotransmitters – chemicals that deliver messages between neurons in the brain and body.” Source

It's important to know that the body doesn't store B vitamins. So, by not getting adequate amounts, you can risk cognitive decline.

Recommended daily dose:

There are Recommended Daily Allowances for B complex vitamins right through pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood and adulthood. Following is the basic requirement for a sedentary person:

Nutrient	Sedentary Man	Sedentary Woman
Thiamine	1.2 mg/day	1 mg/day
Riboflavin	1.4 mg/day	1.1 mg/day
Niacin equivalent	16 mg/day	12 mg/day
Pantothenic Acid	5 mg/day	5 mg/day
Pyridoxine	2 mg/day	2 mg/day
Biotin	30 mcg/day	30 mcg/day
Dietary Folate	200 mcg/day	200 mcg/day
Cyanocobalamin	1 mcg/day	1 mcg/day



B Vitamins Natural Food Sources

A few natural sources of B vitamins include:

Whole Grains:

Refined grains are processed, which strips away many nutrients. Instead, go for whole grains which retain their nutritional content. Whole grains are rich in many of the B vitamins include oats, barley, brown rice, millets, and quinoa.

Avocados:

Avocados contain a good amount of B6. They also contain many other vitamins and minerals, and healthy fats.

Citrus Fruits:

Citrus fruits contain many of the B vitamins, and also include fibre, other essential nutrients, and antioxidants. Some examples include oranges,

grapefruit, clementines and lemons.

Legumes:

Legumes is a food group that includes lentils and beans. This is a fantastic and economical vitamin B source, particularly for vegetarians and vegans. And apart from the B vitamins, legumes come with lots of good dietary fibre and other essential nutrients.

Animal Products:

B12 is mainly found in animal products. Meat, poultry and fish are excellent sources of vitamins B3, B6, and B12. They also contain other important minerals such as potassium, iron, selenium, and zinc. Liver and eggs are also good sources of certain B vitamins.

How are you including B vitamins into your diet?

B Vitamins Supplements

When considering taking a vitamin B supplement:

We don't recommend taking a supplement to replace a healthy diet.

You should initiate B complex supplements if your clinical reports suggest of a deficiency or if you have any of the following complaints:

- Muscle cramps
- Weakness or fatigue
- Tingling or numbness sensation in the extremities of your hands or feet
- Anemia
- Mouth ulcers
- Mood shifts
- Issues with vision

Based on our expertise in creating quality supplements, here are some tips to help you select a quality product:

Consult your doctor.

It is best to consult a nutritionist or physician for your course of supplementation if you have been identified as clinically deficient. The dosage recommended to manage deficiency is higher than the normal dosage. If you are a healthy adult, you can follow the dosage specified in the previous section.

Get a supplement that contains all the B vitamins.

To get the best out of your supplement, ensure that it covers the entire range of B complex vitamins. If you are a vegetarian or vegan, ensure that you take at least a vitamin B12 supplement daily as it is a common deficit in the diet.

Stick to the recommended dosage.

B complex is generally regarded as safe to consume as they are water soluble vitamins, which means that even if you consume a little extra, your body can flush it out through the urine (providing you are drinking sufficient water). However, make sure to consume your supplements as per the recommended dosage on the package.

Do you take a B vitamin supplement?

Antioxidants

Preventing oxidative damage

Antioxidants are compounds that are found in food sources. They are important for many reasons, but one of their key roles is protecting the body from oxidative stress.

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Oxidation is a normal process that happens in the body. During normal cell metabolism, a type of unstable molecule called a free radical is created. While it's normal to have free radicals, when they build up in cells they can cause damage to other molecules in the body. This is called oxidative stress. This causes inflammation, diseases, and even aging.

Free radicals are created from our body's internal metabolic processes.

However, they can also be generated by air pollution, smoking, excess UV radiation, high blood sugars, alcohol consumption, and a high intake of oils.

Antioxidants are able to stabilize the free radicals so that they become less reactive. This prevents oxidative stress and damage to the cells of the body.

Oxidative stress can happen anywhere in the body, including in the brain.

“The brain uses an abundance of oxygen due to its high metabolic activity. This makes the brain more susceptible to free radical attack than just about any other area of the body. Free radical attack on brain cells results in memory loss. Source

In other words, antioxidants can protect cell damage from free

radicals, and could possibly help prevent memory loss.

Some examples of antioxidants include vitamins C and E, and selenium as well as carotenoids such as beta-carotene, lutein, lycopene, and zeaxanthin.

Fun fact:

Carotenoids and flavonoids are antioxidants that give plants their color.

These are natural pigments in fruits and vegetables, which also have antioxidant properties that help protect the cells. And the brighter the colour, the richer the antioxidants.

Therefore, you can simply focus on having a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables and know you're nourishing your body with a variety of powerful antioxidants.



Antioxidants Natural Food Sources

A few natural sources of antioxidants include:

Berries

Berries are an amazing source of antioxidants and other essential nutrients, particularly for the brain. Examples include cranberries, blueberries, blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries.

Whole Fruits:

Apart from berries, any whole fruits contain antioxidants. Examples include citrus fruit and tomatoes.

Green Vegetables:

Green and leafy vegetables are particularly rich in brain-healthy nutrients like vitamin K, lutein, folate, and beta carotene. Some examples include spinach, kale, collards, and broccoli.

Whole Vegetables:

Just like fruits, all whole vegetables contain antioxidants.

Dark Chocolate:

Dark chocolate contains flavonoids, which are strong antioxidants. The darker the chocolate, the better.

Herbs and Spices:

Many herbs and spices, like turmeric, cinnamon and ginger, are full of antioxidants.

Green Tea:

Green tea contains flavonoids, which function as powerful antioxidants and help protect the body.

How are you including Antioxidants into your diet?

Antioxidants Supplements

When considering taking an antioxidant supplement:

We don't recommend taking a supplement to replace a healthy diet full of whole fruits and vegetables.

However, an extra dose of antioxidants in addition to your regular fruits and veggies can definitely help, especially if you have medical conditions.

Most importantly, even though most veggies and fruits contain antioxidants, the way we process, cook and treat them before consumption influences their antioxidant activity and may also decrease it.

Based on our expertise in creating quality supplements, here are some tips to help you select a quality product:

While there are many antioxidant supplements, here are few that we would suggest that you could take daily:

- **Beta Carotene** – 4.8 mg (cellular health)
- **Vitamin C** – 40 mg (immunity, matrix of bones)
- **Vitamin E** – 10 mg (skin and hair protection, immunity)
- **Astaxanthin** – 4 mg (overall-eye, heart and anti-aging)
- **Curcumin** – 500 mg (benefits brain health)
- **Glutathione** – 300 mg (Critical for cellular health)
- **CoQ10** – 100 mg (good for heart health)

A combination of any one of these along with a healthy regular diet will definitely go a long way in achieving your potential.

Consume as per the recommended dosage on the supplement pack. Some antioxidants are fat soluble and may get stored to a certain extent in the body which is why accurate dosing is important.



Are you ready to nourish your brain with nutrition and supplements?

Your brain runs your entire operating system, and needs to be taken care of. And while there are many ways to do that, food is a great place to start.

If you can make sure that you're getting adequate omega-3 fatty acids, B vitamins and antioxidants, you're nourishing your brain in a variety of ways that can help keep it strong.

And again, we never recommend replacing a balanced wholesome diet with supplements. However, if you do need the support, a quality supplement can help you get the essential nutrients you need.

If you'd like to learn more about Nutrition and Supplements, visit our [Instagram page](#).

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