

# Mindful Eating for a Healthy Brain



## Supercharge Your Cognitive Health with Everyday Foods

As you grow older, your brain is exposed to more harmful stress due to lifestyle and environmental factors, resulting in a process called oxidation, which damages brain cells. Food rich in antioxidants can help fend off the harmful effects of oxidation in your brain. A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains and legumes, fish, healthier fats, herbs, nuts and seeds can boost the brain's memory functioning.

Here's how to incorporate memory boosting foods into your diet:



### 1 Load your plate with fruits and vegetables

Eat fruits and vegetables every day. Spinach, kale, broccoli and other dark leafy green vegetables are rich in many brain-loving nutrients. Blueberries, raspberries and blackberries are packed with antioxidants; they can potentially slow aging in the brain and elsewhere. Grapes and watermelon are other good memory boosting fruits. Eat some every day.



### 2 Eggs

The protein and vitamins B, D and E in eggs and egg yolks may help to improve memory. Egg yolk also includes choline, an important brain nutrient. Contrary to common belief, eggs do not raise your cardiac risk and newer research suggests eggs may actually improve your cholesterol profile so can be enjoyed daily.



### 3 Fish and Omega-3 fatty acids

Fish is a great source of omega-3, the type of fatty acid your body can't produce; it is also good for your brain. At least twice a week, eat four ounces of omega-3-rich fish, such as salmon, sardines, mahi, tuna or snapper. If you don't like fish or have an allergy, walnuts, flaxseeds or soybeans provide omega-3 fatty acids as well.



## 4 Get going with grains

Whole grains – such as oats, barley and quinoa – are rich in many of the B vitamins that work to reduce inflammation of the brain. Legumes and beans are also a great source of fibre, folate and other B vitamins.

## 6 Herbs and Spices

Many herbs and spices – such as turmeric, cinnamon and ginger – are packed with antioxidants that may decrease harmful inflammation in the brain and elsewhere. The strong flavors and the bright, intense colors are clues to the benefits hiding inside your spice cabinet. Other herbs and spices to focus on include: rosemary, mint, and saffron.



## 5 Tea and Coffee

Coffee, one of the world's most popular beverages, has been shown to improve memory and potentially decrease your risk of dementia. Up to three cups (8 oz per cup) of black coffee or tea a day are recommended. Black and green teas contain brain-boosting antioxidants. Remember not to drink caffeinated tea or coffee in the late afternoon or evening so sleep isn't interrupted.

## 7 Dark Chocolate

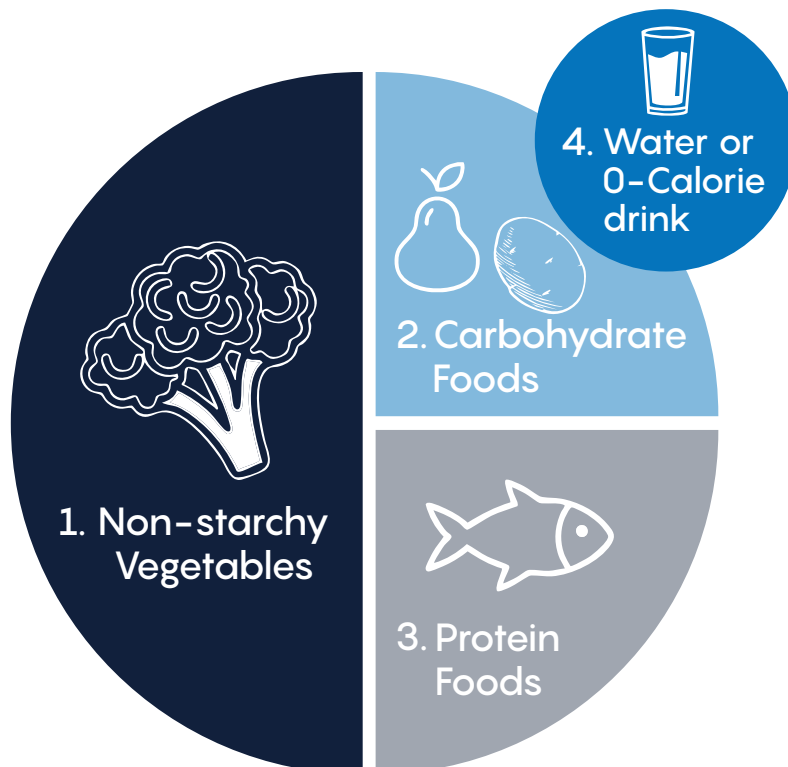
Dark chocolate contains flavonoids, which are strong antioxidants. They potentially improve blood flow to the brain and reduce inflammation. Unsweetened cocoa powder offers the greatest benefit, followed by dark chocolate with at least 72 percent cocoa solids. Keep portions small though, about 1oz per day.

## 8 Nuts, Seeds and Healthy Fats

Healthy fats can help reduce LDL cholesterol levels and help improve vascular health when eaten in place of unhealthier saturated fats. Good sources of healthy fats include: olive oil, avocado, nuts and seeds. Include at least one source daily.

## 9 Follow The Plate

For a quick and easy way to plan your meals, follow The Plate: 1/2 plate vegetables, 1/4 plate grains, 1/4 plate protein.



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