



# Best Brain Foods

Tips to Increased Productivity Through Nutrition



# Agenda

- ◆ Who am I?
- ◆ Why Food Matters
- ◆ Best Brain Foods
- ◆ Tips for Your Brain

Handout: Snacks for your busy day



## Who am I?

Let food be your medicine  
and medicine be your food

Hippocrates

- ◆ Founder of North Shore Nutrition
- ◆ Registered Holistic Nutritionist
- ◆ Certified Professional Cancer Coach
- ◆ Certified Personal Trainer and Group Fitness Instructor
- ◆ 8 years in the health & wellness industry
- ◆ Mom of 2 active teenagers, wife to a busy husband

# Why Food Matters

- ◆ The brain requires certain materials to function well: sugar (glucose), vitamins & minerals and other essential chemicals
- ◆ Main mental fuel is glucose that can be found in carbohydrates of all sorts
- ◆ Brain produces essential proteins and fatty acids to grow and maintain connections between the neurons and to add myelin (the fatty sheath) to axons
- ◆ Vitamins & minerals are essential to the body but are not manufactured by the body so they must be consumed within our daily diet

# Why Food Matters

- ◆ Low calorie diets may result in changes in brain functioning
- ◆ Skipping breakfast is associated with lower verbal fluency, lower ability to solve problems and the lack of motivation
- ◆ Energy deprivation slows down most non-essential functions, hormonal levels, oxygen transportation, immune level efficiency, and several other physical functions that somewhat affect brain function
- ◆ Continual low energy intake can lead to feeling unenthusiastic, sad and depressed.

# Best Brain Food

- ◆ **Blueberries:** ½ cup to 1 cup per day
- ◆ If you want to maximize your antioxidant benefits from blueberries, go organic!
- ◆ Improves cognitive processing (translation: thinking)
- ◆ Research has found that blueberries can also reverse age related declines in motor function, balance, and coordination.
- ◆ **Wild Salmon:** 4oz 2-4 times per week
- ◆ Rich in Omega-3 fatty acids, salmon helps your brain develop tissue for increasing your brain power.
- ◆ Salmon also plays a key role in fighting Alzheimer's and other age-related cognitive disorders
- ◆ 4 oz serving of wild salmon provides a full day's requirement of vitamin D

# Best Brain Food

- ◆ **Eggs:** Choline (B-Vitamin) found in egg yolks
- ◆ Increasing choline intake can improve memory
- ◆ An egg contains about 113 mg of choline
- ◆ Choline is a key component of many fat-containing structures in cell membranes, whose flexibility and integrity depend on adequate supplies of choline
- ◆ **Lentils:** very good source of cholesterol-lowering fiber
- ◆ Rich in dietary fiber, both the soluble and insoluble type
- ◆ In addition to providing slow burning complex carbohydrates, lentils can increase your energy by replenishing your iron stores
- ◆ Low calorie, vegetarian source of protein

# Best Brain Foods

- ◆ **Green Tea:** best food source of a group called catechins
- ◆ Usual amount is three cups per day
- ◆ Green tea may inhibit the development of Alzheimer's by increasing the amount of acetylcholine (Ach)
- ◆ Green tea helps prevent cognitive loss due to aging and age related dementia
- ◆ **Nuts and Seeds:** packed with protein and essential fatty acids
- ◆ Nuts and seeds contain the amino acid arginine, which stimulates the pituitary gland at the base of the brain to release growth hormone, a substance that declines quickly after age 35
- ◆ Walnuts are made up of 15 to 20 percent protein and contain Omega 6 and Omega 3 fatty acids, Vitamin E and B6



# Tips for Your Brain

1. Eat a balanced breakfast within 1 hour of waking up
2. Start your day with fiber and protein
3. Consume low GI carbohydrates throughout the day
4. Eat snacks in between meals
5. Avoid processed sugar and empty calories (see the sweet tooth snack list for healthy alternatives)

# Sample Meal Plan

- ◆ **Breakfast:** Smoothie, Oatmeal with fruit, Eggs with whole grain toast
- ◆ **Snack:** apple with peanut butter, handful of nuts, cream cheese on Ryvita cracker
- ◆ **Lunch:** Chicken salad with chickpeas, Turkey and black bean salad
- ◆ **Snack:** Greek yogurt with granola, veggies and hummus
- ◆ **'Dinner':** vegetable soup, green salad, smoothie

# Questions

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