

## Brain Healthy Eating Exercise

*Spend some time completing this exercise and discuss with your Licensed Brain Trainer.*

### **Follow the 11 BRIGHT MINDS Rules of Brain Healthy Eating**

#### **Rule #1: Go for “high-quality calories” (and not too many of them)**

Be mindful of your caloric intake and make sure you are consuming high-quality foods you love that love you back.

What low-quality foods - think high-fat, high-glycemic, pesticide-laden, processed foods - do you currently eat? Which ones are you willing to ditch from your diet?

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_____	_____
_____	_____
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#### **Rule #2: Water your brain**

Drink half your weight in ounces of water a day to stay properly hydrated. Your brain is comprised of 80 percent water and being even mildly dehydrated can negatively impact your moods - making you feel more anxious, tense, depressed, or angry - in addition to sapping your energy levels and lowering your ability to concentrate.

Based on your weight, how many ounces of water do you need each day? \_\_\_\_\_

What dehydrating beverages are you willing to give up now and replace with water?

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_____	_____

#### **Rule #3: Eat high-quality lean protein throughout the day**

As much as possible, make sure your protein sources (and the rest of your foods) are clean, which means organic, hormone-free, antibiotic-free, free range and grass fed. The best protein sources are:

- Eggs
- Fish (wild, not farmed)
- Lamb
- Turkey or chicken
- Raw nuts
- High-protein vegetables such as broccoli and spinach

#### **Rule #4: Eat smart carbohydrates (low glycemic, high fiber)**

Low Glycemic: Generally speaking, you should eat foods on the lower end of the Glycemic Index (G.I.) to lower your blood glucose levels, decrease cravings and help with weight loss. This should include vegetables, fruits, legumes and nuts.

Unfortunately, many popular foods in the Standard American diet are on the high end of the G.I., including white bread, baked potatoes and bagels. Go online to obtain a list of the Glycemic Index and list of high-glycemic foods currently in your diet that you will replace with low-glycemic foods.

**High G.I. foods I currently eat:**

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**I will replace with these low G.I. foods:**

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**Note:** *Be sensible about this. For example, just because peanut M&Ms have a lower G.I. than steel-cut oatmeal doesn't mean they are better for you!*

**High Fiber:** These foods can help you lose weight! Dietary fiber helps regulate your sense of hunger, helps you feel fuller longer and slows the absorption of food into your blood stream, which helps keep your blood sugar balanced.

Experts recommend adults eat 25 to 35 grams of fiber each day. Take a few minutes to calculate how much you have been getting on average each day, and if it falls below the recommended level, make a conscious effort to increase your fiber intake.

**Write down four high-fiber foods you will add to your diet.**

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**Rule #5: Focus your diet on healthy fats**

Once the water is removed from it, your brain is about 60% fat, so fat is an important nutrient everyone needs. But we are talking about good fats, not unhealthy ones like trans fats.

**Which of these unhealthy fats are in your diet?**

- Trans fats: Also known as “hydrogenated” vegetable oils, trans fats are in many processed foods and baked goods
- Lard
- Marbled meat
- Full-fat dairy
- Fried foods

**News Flash:** You need to omit all of these from your diet. They are unnatural, very unhealthy, increase cholesterol and can cause weight gain. Replace unhealthy fats with healthy fats such as:

- Avocados
- Flax seeds
- Cold-water fish such as salmon
- Nuts
- Oils: coconut oil, grapeseed oil, olive oil

**Rule #6: Eat from the rainbow**

A healthy diet includes natural foods in a rainbow of colors. Write down your favorite fruits and vegetables that are:

Yellow \_\_\_\_\_ Blue \_\_\_\_\_

Red \_\_\_\_\_ Purple \_\_\_\_\_

Green \_\_\_\_\_ Orange \_\_\_\_\_

**Rule #7: Cook with brain-healthy herbs and spices to boost your brain**

Expand your repertoire of cooking using these brain healthy spices and herbs:

- Turmeric (found in curry) has been shown to decrease the brain plaques associated with Alzheimer’s disease.
- Saffron can help with depression.
- Rosemary, thyme and sage help boost memory.
- Cinnamon can help attention and blood sugar. It’s also an antioxidant and an aphrodisiac.
- Garlic and oregano boost blood flow to the brain.
- Ginger, cayenne and black pepper boost metabolism and have an aphrodisiac effect.

**Rule #8: Make sure your food is as clean as possible**

Like rule #3 says, it’s best to eat food that is: organic, hormone-free, antibiotic-free, free range, and grass fed. Furthermore, eliminate food additives, preservatives, artificial dyes, and sweeteners.

Follow these guidelines:

- Read labels!
- If you can’t pronounce it, don’t eat it.
- If you don’t know what is in something, don’t eat it.

**Rule #9: Check out food allergies**

If you’re having problems with your mood, energy, memory, weight, blood sugar, blood pressure or skin or other health problems with no apparent cause identified by your doctor, you should consider eliminating wheat and any other gluten-containing grain or food, as well as dairy, soy and corn.

Talk to your health-care professional about an elimination diet to see what foods might be causing you problems.

**Rule #10: Eat for your Brain Type**

Have you ever wondered why some people do well on high-protein diets while others feel irritable and can’t stick with it? It depends on your brain type.

- Balanced: People with a balanced brain typically do well with a balanced diet.
- Spontaneous: People who are spontaneous or impulsive tend to do better on a high-protein diet.
- Persistent: People with the persistent brain type respond better to a diet that’s higher in smart carbohydrates.
- Sensitive: People with are sensitive or sad typically do well on a balanced diet.
- Cautious: People who are cautious or anxious can eat a balanced diet.

**Rule #11: Follow these tips**

Add these brain healthy foods to your diet. Place a check next to the brain healthy foods below that you love or that you will add to your diet.

**Brain Healthy Fruits**

- Apples
- Avocados
- Berries (acai, blueberries, blackberries, goji berries, strawberries)
- Cherries
- Grapefruit
- Kiwi
- Oranges
- Peaches
- Plums
- Pomegranates

**Brain Healthy Veggies**

- Asparagus
- Beets
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Garlic
- Kale
- Leeks
- Onions
- Red bell peppers
- Seaweed
- Spinach

**Brain Healthy Nuts**

Nuts (raw)

- Cacao
- Almonds
- Brazil nuts
- Cashews
- Walnuts

**Brain Healthy Seeds**

- Chia
- Flax
- Hemp
- Sesame

**Brain Healthy Roots**

- Maca
- Shirataki noodles - wild
- Yam

**Brain Healthy Oils**

- Avocado
- Coconut
- Macadamia
- Olive

**Brain Healthy Animal Products**

(grass fed, hormone free, antibiotic free, free range, harvested humanely)

- Eggs
- Fish
- Lamb
- Chicken
- Turkey
- Beef

**Brain Healthy Beverages**

- Water
- Coconut water
- Sparkling water with lemon and stevia
- Spa water with fruit

**Brain Healthy Sweeteners**

- Stevia
- Xylitol
- Erythritol
- Honey – small doses