

# Fit Brain Fit Life

## Get Fat & Rich for Brain Health

Go ahead, get fat! That statement is likely to provoke a negative response. The 90's low fat trend created a fear of fat in our diet and literally starved us of the most essential nutrient for brain health. And while fat is essential, it acts more as a building block than prevention to an aging brain. So what can we do to protect our beautiful grey matter? Get rich! Diets rich in antioxidants can help slow the process of aging in the brain and can improve cognitive functioning, and delay memory decline by acting as a defender to oxidative stress that damages brain cells. We all can benefit from making a stronger connection between our diet and brain health. Here are a few of the best brain foods providing essential fatty acids (aka good fats) and antioxidants that you can begin incorporating into your diet. Your brain will thank you for it!



**Wild Salmon** - A rich source of Omega 3 fatty acids. More than two thirds of the brain is made up of DHA, the main fat found in oily fish. DHA is critical for brain function and functioning of the nervous system.



**Walnuts** - When you look at a walnut what does it look like? You've got it, the tube-like structures of the brain. They too are rich in Omega 3's, but also contain unique antioxidants that are found in very few foods.



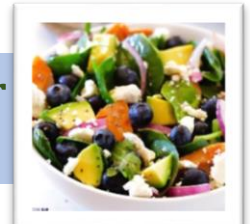
**Avocado** - Healthy unsaturated fats help to keep brain cell membranes flexible, protect brain cells, and show benefits to the prefrontal cortex which is responsible for planning and critical thinking.



**Blueberries** - Antioxidants in berries called polyphenols cross the blood brain barrier allowing these protective compounds access to brain tissue to prevent oxidation. Oxidation can lead to inflammatory response in the brain contributing to neurological decline and disease.



**Whole Grains**- Whole grains like oatmeal and brown rice play a valuable role in our diet by promoting production of neurotransmitters, blood flow, and circulation in the brain. They reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke, and improve cognition.



### Brain Booster Salad

#### Salad Ingredients:

- 8 ounces smoked or grilled salmon, roughly chopped
  - 1 avocado, peeled, pitted and diced
  - 4 cups baby spinach (or mixed greens)
  - 1/2 cup fresh blueberries
  - 1/4 cup light feta or blue cheese crumbles
  - 1/4 cup chopped walnuts (optional)
  - half a red onion, thinly sliced
- Toss in honey chia seed vinaigrette

#### Honey Chia Seed Vinaigrette

- Ingredients:
- 1/3 cup olive oil
  - 2 Tbsp. apple cider vinegar
  - 1 Tbsp. chia seeds
  - 1 Tbsp. honey
  - 1/4 tsp. salt

Source: <https://www.gimmesomeoven.com/brain-power-salad-blueberry-avocado-spinach-salad/>

#### Sources:

- <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/ana.23594>
- <http://scienceline.org/2014/03/why-is-salmon-good-for-your-brain/>
- <https://www.livescience.com/35571-walnuts-healthy-antioxidants.html>
- <https://healthyeating.sfgate.com/avocado-brain-function-6231.html>
- <http://www.todaysgeriaticmedicine.com/archive/0715p10.shtml>