

**Join us for the Fitwize  
Nutrition Talk on Friday, April 20  
from 4 to 5 PM!**

During the April nutrition session, we  
will talk about “Brain Food!”

We will learn about nutrients  
and foods that nourish our brains  
and keep them functioning.

## Brain Food

By Stephanie Mull, MS, RD, CSSD, CSCS

Have you ever thought that you would like your brain to function better? Maybe remember more things? Or be able to process information faster? Do you wish you could get rid of that foggy brain feeling that occurs sometimes (or always)? There is no one type of food to support your brain, but there are many nutrients that enhance your brain's ability to function, which includes cognition, reaction time and memory.

- *Carbohydrates*

Consuming adequate carbohydrate feeds your brain. Your brain loves glucose! Glucose easily gets into the brain and supports its function. It is your brain's fuel! Have you ever cut carbs or not eaten enough carbs and experienced headaches? They occur due to not giving your brain enough fuel. If you need to make sure you are very focused for a meeting or a test, or if you are studying and need to retain as much information as possible, it's best to consume some carbohydrate within 1 hour of these tasks. The rest of your day should include fiber-containing carbohydrate at every meal and at snacks as needed. Your goal is to fuel your brain all throughout the day.

- *Omega-3 fatty acids*

These types of fats support brain development and they help repair damaged brain cells. This keeps your brain healthy. Omega-3 fatty acids are found in many types of fish including salmon, tuna packed in oil, and sardines; nuts such as walnuts and almonds; and oils such as olive. Replace meat and poultry with fish twice a week and add tuna as a snack. It's not possible to consume a dose of omega-3 fatty acids that is beneficial through diet alone. Therefore, a daily supplement should be taken. There are DHA/EPA chews for children. Adults can consume an omega-3 fatty acid supplement through chews, pills or liquid form.

- *Berries and Cherries*

Dark-colored berries and cherries are rich in antioxidants, such as anthocyanins and flavonoids. These support brain cells which can improve memory and cognition. Work in dark colored berries and cherries at snacks, in yogurt or on top of oatmeal and cereal.

- *Dark green vegetables*

These foods are packed full of vitamins and minerals which keep brain cells healthy by supporting repair of damaged cells and growth of new ones. Include various dark green vegetables in salads, smoothies or sautéed as your veggie side.