

Evidence Sheet for Brain Health

The Brain Health Support Program was developed using the MIND diet framework, which is a combination of the Mediterranean and DASH eating patterns. The MIND diet has been attributed to improved cognitive thinking and slowing the progression of neurodegenerative disorders like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease.

This program was created with the following key considerations:

Healthy Fats

[Good quality fats](#) are associated with a lower risk of developing dementia. This plan is rich in monounsaturated fat and polyunsaturated fat from olive oil, avocado, salmon, nuts, and seeds. It is lower in saturated fat, meats, and dairy products. Olive oil is the main source of fat and contains tocopherols, polyphenols, and a balanced linoleic/alpha-linolenic acid profile, which is beneficial for the immune system and inflammatory responses.

Antioxidants

The [antioxidants](#) in berries are thought to benefit brain function by protecting the brain from oxidative stress. [Berries](#) reduce inflammation that would otherwise damage the body's neurons, they are high in fiber which boosts digestive health, and a higher intake of flavonoids appears to reduce rates of cognitive decline in older adults. [Vitamin E](#) is found in nuts, plant oils, seeds, and [leafy greens](#), and is a very potent antioxidant associated strongly with brain health. The plan also includes vitamin C which has been found to help neurons cope with aging.

Fiber

This plan provides at least three servings of whole grains daily, green leafy vegetables, nuts, berries, and beans providing up to 45 grams of fiber per day. Increased [whole-grain intake](#) is linked to a reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer, respiratory disease, diabetes, and infectious disease.

Low Sodium

The [DASH diet](#) recommends restricting sodium to less than 2,000 milligrams per day to prevent or treat hypertension and reduce the risk of stroke and cardiovascular disease. The [Mediterranean diet](#) is linked to improvements in blood pressure, reduced risk of heart disease, and better insulin sensitivity. This program meets the sodium limit and provides less than 1,100 milligrams of sodium daily.