



BRAIN FOOD & RECIPE GUIDE



WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO PURE TRAINING NUTRITION FOR THESE RECIPES.



Pure Training Nutrition



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REFERENCES: Barnard, N. (2013) Power Foods For The Brain. New York: Grand Central Publishing; Holford, P. (2014) Good Medicine. London: Piatkus Ltd; Holford, P. (2010) Optimum Nutrition For The Mind. London: Piatkus Ltd; MPerlmutter, D. (2015) Brain Maker. St Ives plc: Clays Ltd



ABOUT US...

Hi, I'm Caroline from Pure Training Nutrition.

From an early age, I was diagnosed with epilepsy and spent much of my childhood in hospital. As I entered into adult life I developed a passion for health and fitness. With this passion came an improved mood, more energy and the more I focused on improving my diet, mind and body, the better my epilepsy became. Eventually, I was able to control my illness through nutrition.

After spending so much time researching the benefits of food and exercise, my passion became my career and I am now a trained personal nutritionist and lecturer on the benefits of health and wellbeing.

Food is our fuel and medicine; the brain in particular thrives on good nutrition. You cannot underestimate the power of nutrition and mental wellbeing. With the right help and support anything is possible. So let's start healing the brain with good food, vitamins and wholesome nutrition. I hope this guide aids you on your journey to optimum health and in your first steps to recovery.



My name is Paul from
P.A.U.L For Brain Recovery.

I know firsthand how beneficial good food can be, not only for the body but also for the brain. In 2012 I had a frontal lobe brain haemorrhage. I was left facing a 2/3 year recovery and told at the end I wouldn't be the same. During my brain recovery I turned to good food as I wanted to give my brain the best chance of repair. I believed good food would be natural medicine for the mind. This would also help optimise my performance during recovery.

Thankfully, I have recovered well and credit food for helping me do so. This guide contains recipes that I used during my recovery, which my brain loved. I hope it can help you on your journey.



FRUIT & VEG

Fruit and vegetables provide us with essential vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and phytonutrients. They create new brain cells and protect and repair our existing ones.

COLOUR IS KEY

Eat fruit and vegetables greatest in colour, to get your highest source of antioxidants and vitamins. Peppers (of all kinds), tomatoes and root veg (carrots, sweet potatoes and beetroot) are all excellent sources.

LEAFY GREENS

All vegetables are highly nutritious, but if I had to choose the best nutrient-rich ones for the brain, they would be green, leafy vegetables such as kale, collards, spinach, chard, turnip greens and broccoli.

BERRIES

Berries are the brain's best friend when it comes to picking a top, nutritious source of fruit. Berry compounds have been linked to improved memory, learning, reasoning skills, decision making, verbal comprehension and numerical ability. High in vitamins, minerals and cell repairing antioxidants. Fresh or frozen (cheaper and still packed with nutrients). These are a super food!

BLACKCURRANTS

One of the best sources of the vital vitamin C. Vitamin C has long been thought to have the power to increase mental agility.

BLUEBERRIES

Highest source of antioxidants. Research has found consumption of blueberries may effectively improve or delay short-term memory loss.





HERBS & SPICES

Herbs and spices not only make food more delicious, they also provide their own unique health and brain-boosting benefits. The top 4 brain-boosting herbs and spices are shown here. Other good brain-boosting herbs include basil, chives, oregano, parsley, sage, and thyme.

CINNAMON

Another spice high in brain boosting antioxidants. Studies have shown this super-powerful spice can greatly enhance memory, visual-motor skills, attention and the ability to focus. It has also been shown to have other health benefits that could improve cognitive function. A nice little 'brain boosting snack' is a bowl of fresh, chopped fruit (berries and a banana), a dollop of Greek yoghurt and a sprinkling of cinnamon. Delicious and nutritious!

GARLIC

Garlic is known for its antioxidant properties, which are especially helpful for the brain. It has multiple factors that all contribute to good brain function. It helps thin the blood, which increases the flow throughout the body, including to the brain. It also helps battle free radical damage (stress) to the brain, which has been associated with degenerative conditions. Garlic has been shown to be effective in preventing and battling tumours in the brain.

ROSEMARY

This fragrant herb has been associated with memory improvement. Like many herbs, it has high antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties to fight free radical (stress) damage in the brain. Research has found rosemary can stimulate nerve growth factor synthesis, thereby reversing nerve cell damage. Rosemary oil has also been found to enhance both memory and concentration.

TURMERIC

The compound curcumin in turmeric is what makes this spice golden for your brain. Curcumin is a potent antioxidant that readily crosses the blood-brain barrier. It can improve memory and research suggests it may even make you smarter. Curcumin increases factors which stimulate brain cell production and can also reduce brain inflammation, which is common after brain injury. Time to spice up that curry!



MEAT, EGGS & FISH

There are many nutrients in animal foods that are absolutely critical for the proper function of the brain, including vitamin B12, vitamin D3, animal protein and essential fats. These essential, brain-building nutrients can only be found in animal food.

EGGS

Eggs are a super food for the brain. Eggs are not only a complete protein - high in healthy fats and B vitamins - but also contain Choline. This is an essential nutrient for brain function, with research suggesting it aids in lifting brain fog and improving memory function.

MEAT

Red meat from grass-fed beef is an excellent source of vitamin B12, which is vital for healthy brain function. People with high levels of markers for vitamin B12 deficiency are more likely to score lower on cognitive tests, as well as have a smaller total brain volume, which suggests a lack of the vitamin may lead to brain shrinkage. Other excellent sources of B12 include liver, fish, shellfish and yoghurt.

OILY FISH

Omega 3 is a super-healthy fat and a super nutrient for the brain and recovery. It also aids in the following:

- Decreases inflammation
- Improves mental sharpness
- Relieves depression
- Improves memory function

The most effective omega-3 fats occur naturally in oily fish as well as in seeds. They have seven oils essential for healthy brain function and general wellbeing. The main sources of oily fish include salmon, trout, mackerel, herring, sardines, pilchards and kippers.

POULTRY

Chicken and turkey are both high in protein, vitamin B12 and B6. Both chicken and turkey contain all of the essential amino acids your body requires on a daily basis. This includes tryptophan, which is essential for healthy brain function, sleep and stabilising your mood.



HEALTHY FATS

The brain is made of 60% fat. Fat is an essential nutrient in keeping the brain in tip top condition. Certain oils, nuts, seeds and avocado all contain the important antioxidant: vitamin E

AVOCADO

Avocados are almost as good as blueberries in promoting healthy blood flow in the brain. They help lower blood pressure - which can be high after a brain injury - are classed as a perfect brain food, loaded with fibre, vitamins (specifically vitamin E), and healthy fats. A super nutrient-rich food for the brain.

CHIA & FLAX SEEDS

Chia and flax seeds are the second-highest source of the brain-rich nutrient omega 3 (oily fish being the highest). Chia seeds are rich in antioxidants, omega 3, fibre, calcium, iron and protein.

Flax seeds are high in:

- Omega 3 (fat that feeds the brain)
- Iron (increases energy, healthy blood flow and oxygen)
- Magnesium (increased energy, muscle function and the nervous system)

COCONUT OIL

Coconut oil is a brain-healthy oil. It contains medium chain triglycerides (MCTs) which gives energy directly to the brain without getting the insulin (sugar) spike. Use for baking, cooking and frying. Organic and unrefined are the best source.

NUTS AND SEEDS

Some nuts and seeds are rich in brain-essential omega-3 fats, B vitamins, vitamin E, iron, zinc, and magnesium. The best sources of nuts include almonds, cashew and brazil nuts, with one of the best sources being walnuts; high in vitamin E. Research has found walnuts are especially good at improving memory and preventing brain ageing. Seeds such as pumpkin and sunflower seeds are also high in essential nutrients.

TREATS

We all need to treat ourselves once in a while, so why not make it a healthy one (all in moderation, of course). Coffee, tea, dark chocolate and red wine are high in flavonoids. Flavonoids are polyphenols, a powerful antioxidant produced by plants. Research has recommended adding polyphenols to the diet to significantly reduce neurological ailments. The main dietary sources are fruit and vegetables but also plant-derived beverages such as red wine, coffee (natural, ground from the bean, not instant), black tea and chocolate (minimum 70% cocoa).

DARK CHOCOLATE

HONEY

DECAF COFFEE

BLACK TEA





CHICKEN SALAD

Serves: 1 person

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 10-15 minutes

This dish is super-high in the brain nutrients omega 3, memory and energy-boosting B vitamins, de-stressing antioxidants and essential amino acids, all essential for recovery and healthy brain function, including sleep and stabilising the mood

Ingredients

2 chicken breasts
1 lemon
Olive oil
Balsamic vinegar
Honey
Goats cheese
Salad leaves
Cherry tomatoes
Walnuts
Pine nuts
Salt and pepper
1/4 red chilli
1 ripe avocado
Parsley

Method

1. Marinate the chicken fillets in olive oil, lemon juice, zest and salt and pepper.
 2. Heat griddle pan and chargrill chicken on each side. Cook until thoroughly cooked throughout and no pink colour remains.
 3. Reduce honey, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, lemon juice and chilli in a saucepan. Season to taste and add finely chopped parsley.
 4. To prepare the avocado: Check the avocado is ripe. To test this the outside should feel like the soft (inner) side of your thumb. Cut all the way around the avocado with a knife, twist and separate into two halves, the skin should pull off or peel away easily and then chop into slices as required.
 5. Chop the salad leaves.
 6. Mix the salad leaves and chopped avocado together.
 7. Toast pine nuts and walnuts in griddle pan.
 8. Plate salad, chicken, roasted nuts in a dish, sprinkle balsamic glaze over salad and crumble goats cheese over the dish.
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STEAK CAROLINA

Serves: 1 person

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 10-15 minutes

A dish high in healthy protein, recovery boosting antioxidants and particularly high in vitamin B12, vital for healthy brain function.

Ingredients

1 steak (of your choice)

1 beetroot

1/2 lemon

Zest of 1/2 an orange

1/2 aubergine

1/2 parsnip

Radishes

1/2 red onion

2-4 apricots

Balsamic vinegar

Extra virgin olive oil

Method

To prepare the beetroot salsa:

1. Chop beetroot into small cubes around 1cm in size.
2. Add a squeeze of lemon juice.
3. Add zest of orange.
4. Add salt and pepper to taste and leave in bowl to serve.

To prepare the spicy marinade for steak:

1. Slice radishes, red onion, chop apricots. Mix everything in a bowl.
2. Add balsamic vinegar and leave ready to marinate the steak.

Prepare your parsnip and aubergine stack:

1. Slice parsnip and aubergine around 0.5mm in thickness.
 2. Lightly fry both on each side for 30 seconds.
 3. Once done, carefully place and stack on top of each other on your plate.
 4. Heat cooking oil in the pan then cook the steak to your preference.
 5. Place steak onto the plate then add the spicy marinade.
 6. Add beetroot salsa and drizzle extra virgin olive oil onto the dish.
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FISH CURRY

Serves: 1 person

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 40 minutes

Nutritious and delicious... high in brain functioning vitamins and minerals B12, selenium, antioxidants and brain-boosting spices cinnamon, turmeric and garlic. All excellent at improving memory, decreasing stress and improving cognitive function.

Ingredients

Fillet of white fish
Choice of shell fish (optional)
Tinned tomatoes
1 garlic clove
Ginger
1 onion
1 chilli
Turmeric
Chicken stock
Parsley
Greek yoghurt
Coconut oil/olive oil

Method

1. Finely chop the onion, garlic and ginger and fry in a frying pan in coconut oil/olive oil until soft.
 2. Add 1 tsp cinnamon and turmeric, 1 pint of stock, 1 tin of tomatoes, 1tsp, sugar and chopped parsley
 3. Bring to boil and then simmer for 15–20 minutes until slightly reduced.
 4. Chop your fish fillet into inch squares.
 5. Add chopped fish, shell fish and a spoonful of Greek yoghurt.
 6. Add a pinch of salt and pepper to taste.
 7. Cook for around 5-7 minutes (until all fish is cooked through).
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SALMON & PRAWN STACK

Serves: 1 person

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 10-15 minutes

A dish high in protein, omega 3 and antioxidants. A plate full of brain building nutrients, which will aid in recovery and improving cognitive function.

Ingredients

2 salmon fillets
Handful of prawns
2-3 slices chorizo
2-3 crackers
1 onion
1 pepper
Mixed salad
1 tsp honey

Method

1. Prepare your salmon fillets for the grill. Cook for about 10-12 mins.
Whilst the salmon is cooking, prepare your prawn stack:
 2. Chop your onion, chorizo and peppers into small cubes.
 3. Break your crackers into small pieces in a bowl.
 4. Add a teaspoon of honey.
 5. Heat a pan and add your prawns. Pan fry in extra virgin olive oil on low heat for a few mins until thoroughly cook.
 6. Once it's done get a cooking mould on your plate. Spoon in your ingredients.
 7. Serve with your mixed salad and your now cooked salmon.
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PANCAKE STACK

Serves: 1-2 people

Preparation time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 5 minutes

We all deserve a treat and this dish offers the sweetness of nutrition in every brain-boosting sense! High in many vitamins and minerals for aiding brain recovery, including omega 3, antioxidants, recovery-building amino acids, healthy fats, B vitamins and choline. A 'berry' essential dish for helping in recovery, improving cognitive function, boosting memory, reducing stress and improving energy.

Ingredients

3 eggs
1 banana
1 tbs of chia seeds
(optional)
Greek yoghurt
(optional)
Fresh/frozen berries
Coconut oil/butter
(For frying)

Method

1. Whisk eggs in a bowl and add the chia seeds (optional).
 2. Mash up your banana and combine with the eggs or blend all together (quick alternative to whisking and mashing).
 3. Heat up the coconut oil/butter in a large pan. Once it is hot, place a heaped tablespoon of the mixture in the pan.
 4. Cook for a couple of minutes on each side until cooked through.
 5. Serve with a choice of berries, a sprinkling of cinnamon and a spoonful of Greek yoghurt (optional).
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Proud of what you have cooked? Why not snap a picture, upload it to social media and tag us in it.



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