

Brain Food Menu

Breakfast:

Breakfast IS the most important meal of the day!

- Cereal or toast, but make sure you choose a low sugar/salt cereal and try to go for wholemeal bread.
- Get a fruit portion in the morning by having a glass of pure fruit juice.
- Porridge - it is surprisingly tasty, and can be made in the microwave. Try it with natural honey and a chopped banana.

Lunch:

To renew mental energy for the afternoon...

- Salads can be a good choice, but make sure you go easy on dressings.
- Jacket potatoes can be very healthy, but try not to have cheese as a topping all the time.
- You should be eating five portions of fruit and vegetables every day, so stock up at lunchtime.

Afternoon Snack:

Use the midday snack to supply your brain with carbohydrates. Choose fresh fruit or low-fat crackers and six ounces of fruit juice or yoghurt.

Dinner:

If you are re not cooking your own tea, try to get whoever is to steer clear of fatty, fried food. A proper evening meal will help your brain to tackle homework.

Bedtime Snack:

Relax your brain and prepare for a good night's sleep with a warm milky drink, honey and banana and peanut butter on brown toast.

What are you drinking?

By far and large, the best liquid to go for is **WATER**

Dehydration is a real brain-stopper, so make sure you keep your cerebral muscles at peace by ingesting plenty of water - it will also help you relax, as the going gets tough.

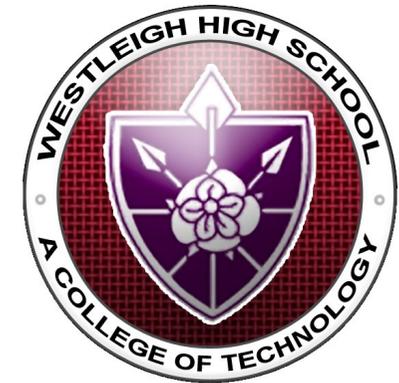


If you are after something hot, opt for green tea over your usual PG Tips, as it's got loads of antioxidants as well as other qualities which will help you keep an (ironically) cool head.



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Foods for Success



*A guide to exam
preparation for body
and mind*



Mood food for best performance

With your exams coming up, it's worth trying to eat a balanced diet. Research has shown that eating certain foods and maintaining a balanced diet can help improve your concentration: so whilst it will not make you a genius, it might just give you the edge you need to perform better in exams!

Mental performance or relaxation can be controlled by choosing the right combination of foods; **Tyrosine** and **Tryptophan** are two amino acids which compete with one another to control brain functions.



Tyrosine is used by the brain to synthesize the neurotransmitters which are critical to clear, quick thinking; long-term memory; and feelings of alertness and stability. It is found in protein-rich foods like meat, egg yolks, peanuts, wheat germ, liver, meat, fish, milk, cheese and vegetables (especially broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower), sea-food, beans, lentils, and thus serves as a nutritional stimulant to the brain.



Dopamine rich foods include all proteins (meat, milk products, fish, beans, nuts, soy products). Just 3-4 ounces of protein will help you to feel energized, more alert and more assertive!

Tryptophan is used by the brain to make the neurotransmitter serotonin, which is responsible for slowing down reaction time, inducing a feeling a peace, calm, serenity and which also can induce sleep.

Tryptophan is found in such foods as bananas, sunflowers seeds, milk, turkey.

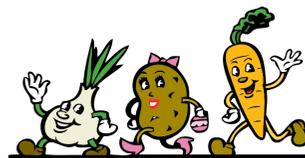


Serotonin rich foods are carbohydrate based e.g. pasta, starchy vegetables, potatoes, cereals, breads. The effects of protein rich tryptophan are augmented when consumed with carbohydrate-rich foods and they help it get through the blood brain barrier more effectively.



If **tyrosine** reaches the brain before **tryptophan**, it will prime your brain to function at **maximum performance levels all day** (or all night, depending upon when you eat the meal or snack).

But if tryptophan reaches the brain first, it will stimulate the production of serotonin, and your mental performance will ebb and your brain will begin to shut down, even in the middle of the day.



Right foods at the right time!

Glucose and Carbohydrates

Carbohydrates help relax the brain and are necessary for maximum mental performance. If consumption is properly timed, carbohydrate-rich foods, such as pasta, bread, legumes, cereals, grains, fruits, and vegetables, can boost the brain's energy levels.



Carbohydrates (abundant in foods that are high in starch and sugar) are quickly broken down by the body into glucose. Carbohydrates enhance mental performance because the brain thrives on glucose. It supplies your brain with the most basic type of energy it needs to think, remember, solve problems, and control the rest of the body.

Foods that are rich in complex carbohydrates, such as whole grains, brown rice, unrefined cereals and flours, vegetables and fruits, provide your brain with a steady supply of glucose and help keep blood sugar levels balanced.

Just as with protein, when you eat carbohydrates is critical to know your brain will respond...

...timing is everything!

What time of day is best for ...

