

# Fuel for Finals

## Boost your brain power with food!

We often think about fueling for our day so we have energy but have you thought about how much energy your brain needs? Your brain uses about **20% of your energy** when you are in a resting state—sleeping or watching tv. Now add in the demand of studying for exams, writing papers, or preparing presentations. Your brain is an energy burning machine!

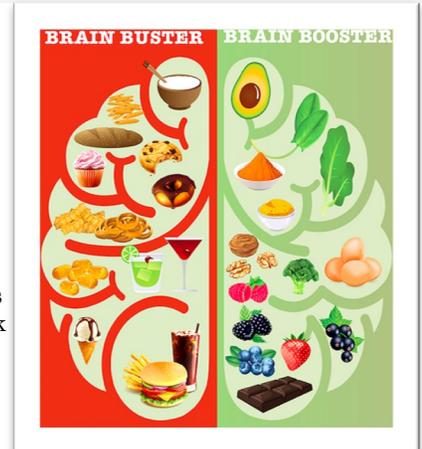
Food choices play a big role in the health and function of your brains. Some foods increase focus and concentration, while others can limit the brain's full potential.

## Foods to include to increase brain power:

1. **Fish.** Especially fatty fish, are well known for their omega-3 content. Omega-3 fats are a major building block of the brain. These anti-inflammatory fats play a role in sharpening memory and improving mood, as well as protecting your brain.
2. **Blueberries.** The deep, rich colors of berries come from anthocyanins; a type of flavonoid with antioxidant effects. Some of these dietary antioxidants find their way to the brain and help communication between brain cells. Improved communication promotes memory and concentration.
3. **Pumpkin seeds.** These often overlooked seeds contain powerful antioxidants that protect the body and brain from free radical damage. They also contain key nutrients that are important for brain health—magnesium, iron, zinc and copper
4. **Dark Chocolate.** This doesn't include high sugar dark chocolate bars. For the best brain boost look for bars that have > 75% cocoa. Just one ounce (1 square) of chocolate provides brain boosting flavonoids, antioxidants, and caffeine.
5. **Nuts.** Often sought after as an easy snack that improves heart health, nuts also provide nutrients to the brain. Nuts contain vitamin E which is a powerful antioxidant that protects cell membranes. For the most omega-3 content, choose walnuts!

## There are several foods to avoid when trying to boost your brain power

When we are tired, what foods do we reach for most? High sugar and high fat foods. Our bodies associate them with quick bursts of energy. Foods high in sugar quickly increase your energy level but, shortly after your energy will drop leaving you with more fatigue—“brain fog”. Fried foods are higher in saturated fats, which are inflammatory and can limit your brains potential.



## Healthy Swaps

### Instead of ....

Ice cream  
Cookies  
Soda  
Coffee with syrups  
French Fries  
Cheeseburger

### Choose....

Unflavored yogurt with berries  
Toast with peanut butter  
Seltzer or infused water  
Tea with honey  
Pretzels and hummus  
Veggie or turkey burger

## Campus Dining Special Diets Survey

Please take a moment to share with campus dining your dietary preference and where you eat on campus.

Any recommendations you have will also help us build our menus and make changes for next semester.

<https://bit.ly/2I7e211>

If you have questions about nutrition or would like to schedule an appointment with the campus dietitian contact Stephanie, our campus dietitian at [smmay@wm.edu](mailto:smmay@wm.edu)

