



HOLY FAMILY
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What's Good for the Body is Good for the Brain

Gen: 1, 29 I have provided all kinds of grain and all kinds of fruit for you to eat.

The mind-body medicine Renaissance coincides with exciting new discoveries about how our brains age and how we may keep our brains young. Of all these brain discoveries, the most significant is neurogenesis (literally, birth of neurons), the process of brain cell regeneration. First identified in a landmark 1998 study, neurogenesis disproved the century-old belief that neurons only generated during brain development. This study opened a new door to peak cognitive (pertaining to mental processes of perception, memory, judgment, and reasoning) longevity – adults as old as 72 have been shown to regenerate neurons. With emerging cognitive function advancements, people from all walks of life and all age groups can supercharge their brainpower in the here-and-now – which may hold incredible promise in terms of raising quality of life.

The latest research suggests the peak brain health solution is a three-step strategy: exercising the body, challenging the mind, and getting the right nutrition.

Discovery 1: Exercise boosts brainpower. Exercise promotes cardiovascular health and good circulation, which helps deliver nourishing neuronutrients, glucose, and oxygen to the brain. Aerobic exercise, as one example makes the neural membranes more supple – this is critical for building, rebuilding, and protecting the brains neurons (also called nerve cells).

Discovery 2: The brain is a “use it or lose it” organ, and mental workouts support peak cognitive function. New learning builds new synapses (an area where nerve impulses are carried over a small gap) on top of old synapses so they stay active. Challenging the brain with puzzles, reading, and other mental workouts appears to stimulate neural development, even as we age – An active brain stays sharp; a passive brain grows dull.

Discovery 3: Neuronutrients supercharge mental performance and help prevent cognitive decline. Neuronutrients are the energizing sustenance that enables you to climb to the highest peak of mental performance.

Some food sources of neuronutrients: Remember your daily intake should be 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. The best vegetables and fruits are bright in color like green, yellow, orange, purple, red and blue. Vegetables rich in neuronutrients are: cabbage, beets, beans, spinach, parsley, Kale, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, broccoli, & mustard greens; Fruits are strawberries, blueberries, concord grapes, cantaloupe, juices, and fermented foods. Other neuronutrients are found in fish, eggs, nuts, whole grains, nonfat & low-fat milk, cheese, yogurt, Canola, soy, walnut & flaxseed oils and seaweed to name just a few.

Information for this article was compiled from: Peoples Health Series: Phosphatidylserine (PS), Mental Clarity at any Age, by Ben C. M.D. Laurel, Ms., Definitions from Random House Webster's College Dictionary, and www.neuronutrientfoods.com. For information find us at Holy Family Parish Nurse @ www.holyfamilystow.com or 330-688-6412 ext. 462.

*May you have a Blessed, Healthy, and Merry Christmas
from your Holy Family Parish Nurses.*