

Choosing Brain Healthy Options: Making it Easy

The basic principle behind brain healthy eating is to stick with the least processed food you can get.

Instead of.... White pasta, white rice, white bread or other refined grains,

Choose.... Whole grain pasta, brown rice/farro/barley/quinoa, whole wheat bread.

Instead of.... Butter, lard, coconut oil, cottonseed or palm kernel oil or other saturated fats (which are solid at room temperature),

Choose.... Plant based oil (ex: olive, avocado, sesame, etc).

Instead of.... Red meat, processed meat (bacon, ham, deli meat), fatty cuts of other meats or meat with the skin on,

Choose.... Skinless chicken, turkey, fish or just decrease the amount of meat on your plate by increasing the vegetables, whole grains and fruits.

Instead of.... Buying low fiber, high sodium, processed snacks.

Choose.... To buy nuts and seeds, or nut butters, eat whole fruits and vegetables as snacks or make your own snacks (such as homemade granola). Snacks should include fiber!

Instead of.... Eating cheese, drinking milk or eating ice cream.

Choose.... Lowfat yogurt, kefir, minimize cheese and ice cream and try to substitute plant based milk when you can (ex: unsweetened nut milks can easily be used in cooking/baking).

Instead of.... Eating a breakfast full of sugar and low in fiber (i.e . most cereals, or other store- bought baked goods).

Choose.... High fiber, low sugar options and try to incorporate a vegetable and whole fruit (leaving the skin on fruit will increase the fiber you get).

Instead of... Eating out,

Choose.... To cook at home!

Instead of... A fad diet,

Choose... To make slow and sustainable changes to your routine!

Instead of... Sugar sweetened drinks or drinks with artificial sweeteners,

Choose... WATER, sparkling water flavored with a squeeze of fresh juice, tea, coffee.

Start by being aware of what you are buying when you are at the grocery store. If something has a long list of ingredients, it is likely an ultraprocessed food. Recognizing what you are buying is the first step!

Do what you can! Not every day will be perfect and that is **OK!!!**

Always discuss any dietary changes with your doctor before making them to ensure that they are right for your body.