

ASK THE EXPERTS

Q: ARE THERE ANY FOODS I CAN EAT TO IMPROVE MY MEMORY? IS THERE REALLY "FOOD FOR THOUGHT"? – ROBERT, 28

A: Memory loss is expected as we age. Over time, our brain gets 'polluted' by toxins from alcohol, smoking and free radicals from our environment. A nutritious diet can delay this process and get rid of these toxins. It also prevents further inflammation of neurons and provides a constant supply of nutrients needed for proper functioning of the brain including memory retention.

Berries are an excellent source of antioxidants and possibly the highest of all the fruits. The flavonoids found in berries mop up the free radicals speedily that causes oxidation and inflammation of the neurons in the brain.

Essential fatty acids are not only heart friendly but brain friendly. They boost mental power by improving memory retention by improving communication between neurons. The omega 3 and 6 fatty acids are responsible for these actions and are present in fatty fish, nuts and seeds. Tuna, salmon, sardines, walnuts, almonds, flaxseeds and pumpkin seeds are some examples.

Iron-rich foods support the transport of oxygen to the brain to carry out mental tasks efficiently. A lack of iron will result in poor concentration and decreased mental performance. Foods rich in iron include red meat, chicken, pork, raisins, dried fruits and green leafy vegetables.

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