

Food & *Brain Health*

Understanding the Connection Between
Diet and Brain Function

How What We Eat Affects Our Mental Health

EMPOWERING YOU WITH KNOWLEDGE
FOR BETTER BRAIN HEALTH



The Brain's Nutritional Needs



Essential Nutrients

Omega-3 fatty acids, antioxidants, and vitamins

Energy Sources

Glucose as the brain's primary fuel

Hydration

Importance of water for cognitive function and mood regulation



Foods That Boost Brain Function

Fatty Fish

Rich in Omega-3s for brain cell structure and function

Berries

High in antioxidants that protect against oxidative stress

Leafy Greens

Packed with vitamins and minerals that support cognitive health

Whole Grains

Provide a steady supply of energy through complex carbohydrates



Foods That Support Mental Health

Nuts and Seeds

Sources of healthy fats and magnesium for mood regulation

Dark Chocolate

Contains flavonoids that may enhance mood and cognitive function

Fermented Foods

Probiotics that support the gut-brain axis

Turmeric

Curcumin in turmeric has anti-inflammatory and antioxidant effects



The Impact of Sugar & Processed Foods on the Brain



High Sugar Intake

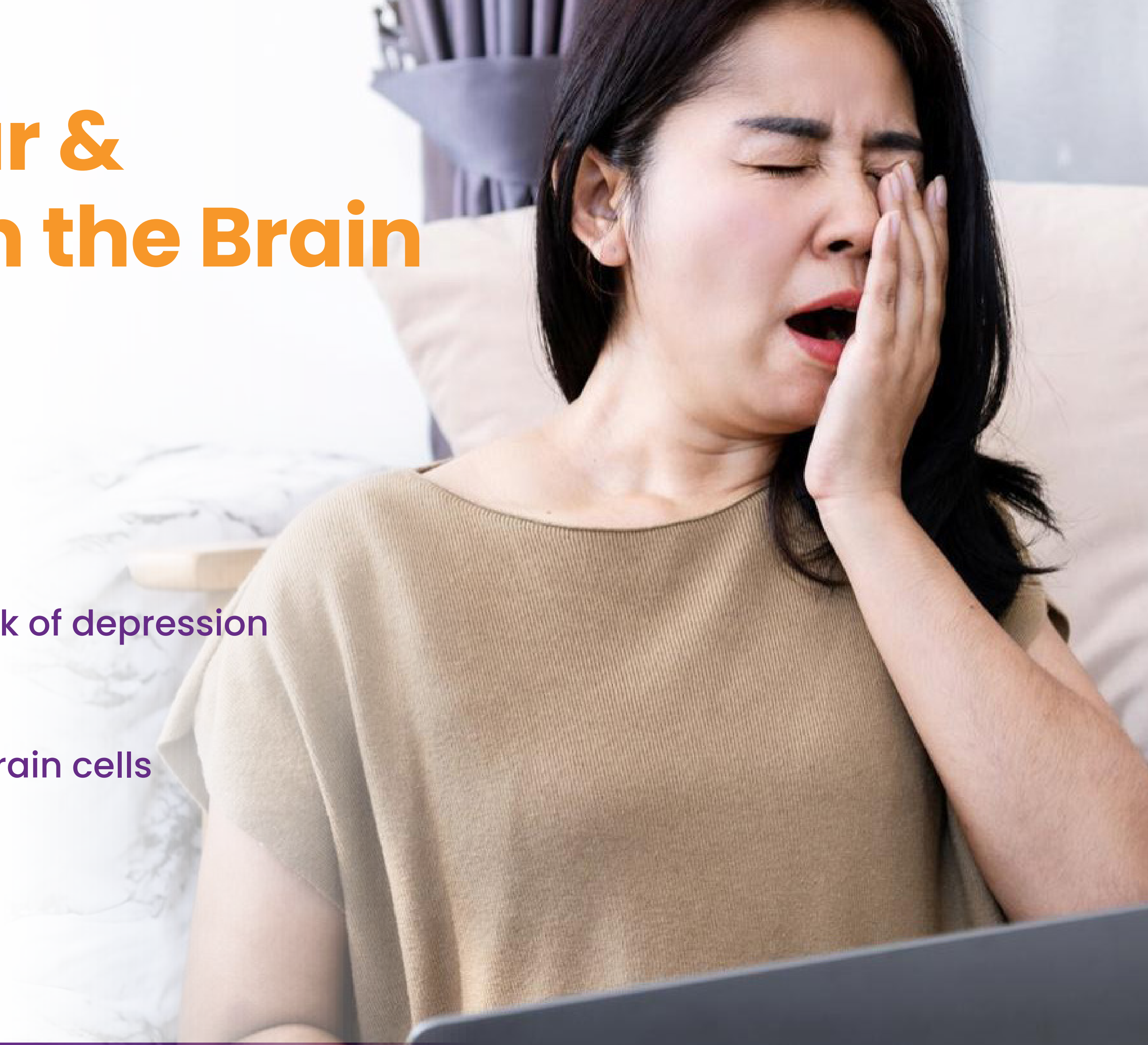
Linked to impaired memory and increased risk of depression

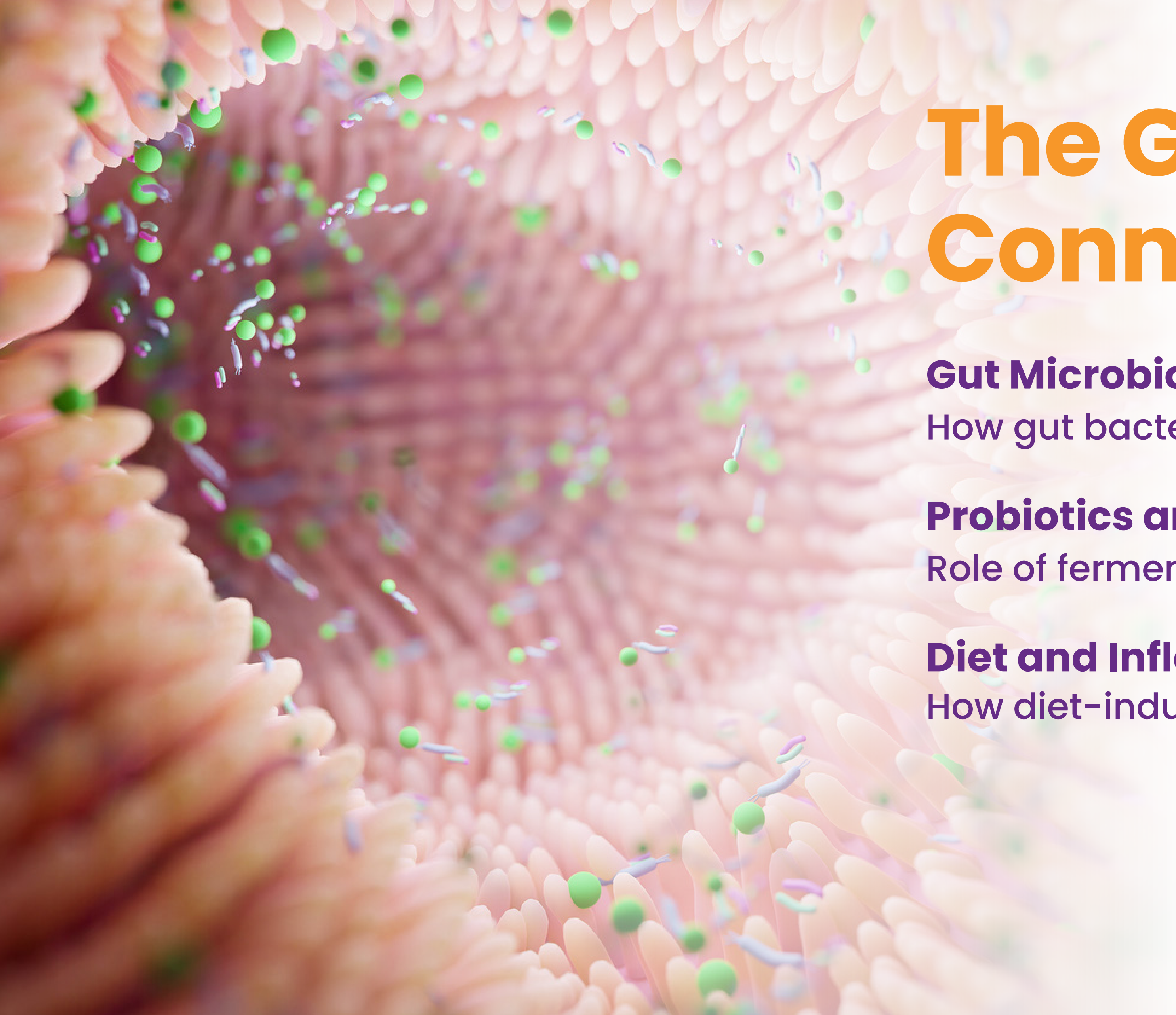
Processed Foods

Often high in trans fats, which can damage brain cells

Blood Sugar Spikes

Lead to energy crashes and impaired focus





The Gut-Brain Connection

Gut Microbiota

How gut bacteria influence brain health and mood

Probiotics and Mental Health

Role of fermented foods in supporting the gut-brain axis

Diet and Inflammation

How diet-induced inflammation affects brain function



Foods for Long-Term Brain Health



Mediterranean Diet

A diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats

Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Importance for preventing cognitive decline

Polyphenols

Antioxidants found in berries, tea, and red wine that support brain health

Leafy Greens

Associated with slower cognitive decline in ageing adults.



Practical Tips for Eating for Brain Health



Balanced Meals

Ensure each meal contains a mix of healthy fats, proteins, and complex carbohydrates

Stay Hydrated

Drink plenty of water throughout the day to support cognitive function

Mindful Eating

Pay attention to how different foods make you feel, both physically and mentally

Plan Ahead

Prepare brain-healthy snacks like nuts, fruit, and yogurt to keep your energy and focus steady

Foods to Avoid for Brain Health

Trans Fats

Found in fried foods, baked goods, and processed snacks

Refined Sugars

Common in sugary drinks, sweets, and desserts

Artificial Additives

Chemicals and preservatives that may affect cognitive function



Other Ways to Keep the Brain Healthy During Menopause

Regular Exercise

Physical activity boosts brain health and cognitive function

Quality Sleep

Ensures the brain has time to repair and detoxify

Stress Management

Techniques like meditation and deep breathing to reduce stress

Mental Stimulation

Engage in activities that challenge your brain, such as puzzles or learning new skills

Social Connections

Maintaining strong social ties supports cognitive health



Summary & Next Steps



Start Small

Encourage beginning with one or two changes that feel manageable

Stay Informed

Continue learning about nutrition, lifestyle, and brain health

Listen to Your Body

Pay attention to how your dietary and lifestyle choices affect your mental well-being

