

GOOD NUTRITION AS BRAIN FUEL

SING FOOD TO GET THE MOST OUT OF STUDY



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THE YEARS SPENT STUDYING CAN BE SOME OF THE MOST REWARDING AND THE MOST CHALLENGING OF OUR LIVES. HIGH SCHOOL AND TERTIARY STUDENTS MUST JUGGLE MULTIPLE DEADLINES, CRAMMING FOR EXAMS, ALL THE WHILE TRYING TO LIVE A SEMI-NORMAL EXISTENCE ON A LIMITED INCOME.



It isn't surprising then that good nutrition is one of the first things to go out the window during times of pressure.

Busy schedules, stress and lack of sleep can drive us to eat high energy, nutrient-poor convenience foods that satisfy us initially before leaving us tired, unmotivated and struggling to keep going.

It is well known that maintaining good nutrition is really important for optimal energy, memory and concentration . . . so how can we make sure we're reaping the nutritional benefits of good food while we study?

By making educated food choices! Eating a predominantly wholefoods diet is one of the best things you can do to get the most out of study.

Here's what that looks like:

- **EAT A RAINBOW OF VEGETABLES** – different colours provide different nutrients, so aim for variety.
- **EAT 1–2 PIECES OF FRUIT** every day.
- **INCLUDE WHOLEGRAIN CARBOHYDRATES IN YOUR DIET**, such as brown rice, quinoa or oats. If you eat bread, choose a wholegrain variety. Aim for a variety of carbohydrates each day.
- **INCLUDE HEALTHY FATS**, like avocado, nuts and seeds, olive oil and dairy products.
- **MAKE SURE YOU'RE EATING SOME LEAN PROTEIN** every day, such as meat, seafood, beans, chickpeas, lentils or eggs.

With lunch and dinner, aim to make half of your meal vegetables. Include protein, some carbohydrate and a little healthy fat and you have a well-balanced meal that will help to fuel your brain and keep you going.

Pre-planned snacks such as boiled eggs, raw nuts and seeds, fresh fruit or veggie sticks with peanut butter or hummus are good to have on hand for when you need something extra. There may be times when you have a craving that you just can't shake – this is completely normal! One of the biggest study pitfalls is mindless eating while stressed and distracted. Before you know it you've demolished a family block of chocolate and you need a nap.

The key is to set the books aside, take the time to really enjoy your treat, noticing when you feel satisfied with the amount you've had and stopping at this point.

Remember, there are no good or bad foods. Rather there are those that nourish us – which we need more of – and those that provide other benefits such as enjoyment – which we eat occasionally.

TIPS FOR EATING ON A BUDGET

- PLAN YOUR MEALS AND DO ONE BULK SHOP
- BUY SEASONAL, CANNED AND FROZEN VEGETABLES
- SWAP OR REDUCE MEAT AND REPLACE WITH BEANS, LENTILS OR CHICKPEAS A FEW TIMES A WEEK
- EXPLORE YOUR LOCAL SUPERMARKET BULK BINS FOR CHEAPER WHOLEGRAINS, NUTS AND SEEDS
- SLOW COOK CHEAPER CUTS OF MEAT. SLOW COOKERS ARE A GREAT WAY TO MAKE QUICK, BUDGET-FRIENDLY MEALS.

TOP FIVE BRAIN FOODS

1. OILY FISH E.G. SALMON & TUNA
2. WALNUTS
3. EGGS
4. LEAFY GREEN VEGETABLES
5. BLUEBERRIES



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