

## Tips for Preventing Cognitive Impairment

Memory loss, mental health, and cognition

By Kayla Slater

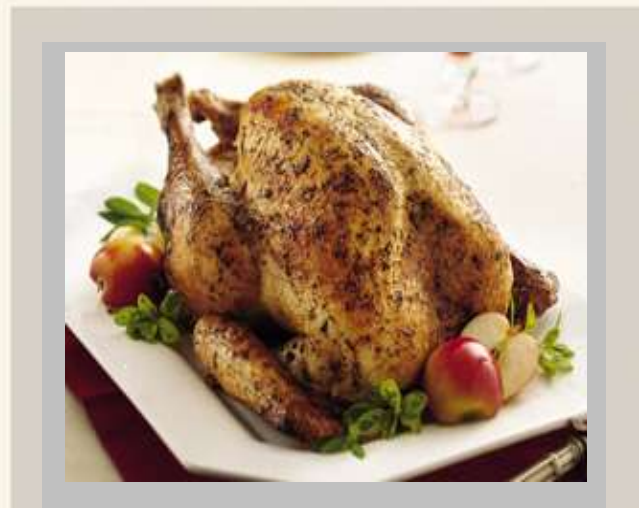
As we age, the brain changes. The blood supply and the number of neurons decrease in the brain. This affects balance, posture, and memory. These changes due to normal aging are controllable through dietary habits.

### What can you do to help prevent losing your memory due to normal aging?

Modify environmental factors such as dietary habits.

### Dietary Benefits

Nutrients are essential for the body to function properly. Some nutrients have protective properties for memory loss.



GOOD SOURCE OF VITAMIN B-12

### Nutrients for memory enhancement:

#### 1. Vitamin B-12

Make sure to get your recommended amount of vitamin B-12. The RDA for adults (70+) is 2.4 micrograms.

Foods high in B-12 are animal products: fish, meat, poultry, eggs, and milk products. Other sources include fortified foods and supplements which are recommended for older adults (70+).

## 2. Folate

Adequate amounts of folate, a water soluble B vitamin is important in your diet. Adequate folate may decrease the risk of the loss of mild cognitive impairment. The RDA for adults 50+ years old is 400 mcg/day. Foods rich in folate include leafy green vegetables, fruits, and dried beans and peas.

## 3. Vitamin D

Adequate amounts of vitamin D, a fat soluble vitamin is important for muscle and bone strength as well as cognitive function. At least 15 micrograms of vitamin D a day are recommended for adults 70+ to decrease the loss of cognitive impairment. Good sources of vitamin D besides sunlight include salmon, tuna, flounder, mushrooms, milk, cheese, pork, and cereals.

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GOOD SOURCE OF FOLATE



GOOD SOURCE OF VITAMIN D



SOURCE OF SATURATED FAT

## Nutrients that may cause loss of cognitive impairment:

DECREASE OF AVOID THESE NUTRIENTS IN YOUR DIET

### 1. Copper

Copper is an essential trace element which in large doses may cause dementia. The RDA for copper in older adults 50+ is 900 mcg/day. More than this recommended amount may lead to the loss of cognitive function. Older adults should avoid copper in water and supplements. Test your water to make sure it does not contain copper. Also, make sure to check labels on supplements for copper.

### 2. Saturated Fats

Saturated fatty acids increase the risk of cardiovascular disease. Saturated fats should be limited in the diet. According to the Dietary Guidelines of 2010, less than 10% of calories should come from saturated fat. High levels increase the risk of mild cognitive impairment. Foods that contain high levels of saturated fat are cheese, butter, cream cheese, fatty meats, and many desserts: cookies, brownies, cake, cheesecake, pie, ice cream, etc.

### 4. Water

Drink lots of water! The recommendation is to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day. For adults (70+) the AI for men is 13 cups/day and for women 9 cups/day. Water is an essential nutrient for the body since the body is made up of 60% water. Adequate hydration helps the brain think!

