

The Mind Diet



WHAT YOU EAT MAY AFFECT YOUR BRAIN - Alzheimer's disease is an irreversible, progressive brain disease that affects an estimated 5.4 million Americans. Its cause is not completely understood, and most likely is due to a combination of genetic, environmental, and lifestyle factors. One factor that has the potential to decrease the risk of developing Alzheimer's disease is food choices.



THE MIND DIET - Martha Clare Morris, a nutritional epidemiologist, conducted a research study using the MIND diet, her combination of the DASH and Mediterranean diet plans. Morris found that the MIND diet lowered risk of Alzheimer's by about 35% for people who followed it moderately well, and up to 53% for people who closely followed it.



FEATURES OF THE MIND DIET - This pattern focuses on 10 food groups to promote health: leafy greens, other vegetables, nuts, berries, legumes, fish (1-2 times per week), poultry, olive oil, & wine (in moderation and if desired). The MIND diet also reduces or avoids foods from these five groups: red meat, butter/stick margarine, cheese, pastries and sweets, & fried/fast food.



THE SCIENCE BEHIND IT - Nutrition has an important role in healthy brain functioning because the brain requires a large amount of energy and variety of nutrients. It's well-known that the nutrients in vegetables (especially green leafy vegetables, which are good sources of folate, vitamin E, and carotenoids), seafood (a good source of omega-3 fatty acids), and berries (a source of polyphenols) play important roles in brain health. More limited data are available on the benefits of monounsaturated fat, carotenoids, polyphenols, and vitamin D.