



FEEDING YOUR BRAIN PART 2

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The importance of consuming the right fats and oils for optimal brain function was discussed in *Feeding Your Brain Part 1 of GHG™*. The brain's sophistication and beautifully orchestrated functioning can be severely hampered by the poor choice of foods, including two other foundation foods, carbohydrates and protein.

CARBOHYDRATES:

Carbohydrates are the brain's preferred source of energy. Due to the size of the brain, it doesn't have much storage capacity. Its huge energy requirements can use up to 50% of the carbohydrates that are eaten and the type of carbohydrates consumed can play a significant role in mental well-being.

THE RIGHT KINDS OF CARBOHYDRATES ARE NUTRIENT-DENSE AND CONTAIN FIBER.

The right kinds of carbohydrates are nutrient-dense and contain fiber, allowing blood glucose levels stay steady and consistent, which leads to stable moods, memory and good weight.

The wrong carbohydrates are nutrient poor and fiber deficient, which result in unstable blood glucose levels that accompany mood swings, cravings, learning challenges and weight gain. These are all signs of a brain struggling to maintain equilibrium and

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support the optimal mental well-being. Unfortunately, stress leads to blood glucose levels becoming unstable too, so adding refined carbohydrates to the mix hampers the brain's ability to maintain and support optimal moods and cognitive capacity.

PROTEIN:

The tiny chemicals that neurons use to speak to or to message each other, are called neurotransmitters and are created using amino acids, which are the building units of proteins. Although the liver produces up to 60% of the amino acids we need, the other 40% must be obtained directly from our diet. Amino acids are linked together in specific sequences to

make the different neurotransmitters that neurons need to function efficiently. Some of these important messengers cause feelings of stimulation and motivation in our brain, while others cause feelings of calmness and security.

Consider the difference between feeling excited and upbeat while you watch an exciting and interesting entertainer compared to the feeling of being safely settled in your bed before falling asleep.

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These contrasting feelings are created by different neurotransmitters relaying different messages depending on the environment that you find yourself in. However, if your liver or your digestive system is compromised in any way, the synthesis of these neurotransmitters will be hampered, leading to challenges with motivation, learning, mood management and sleep.

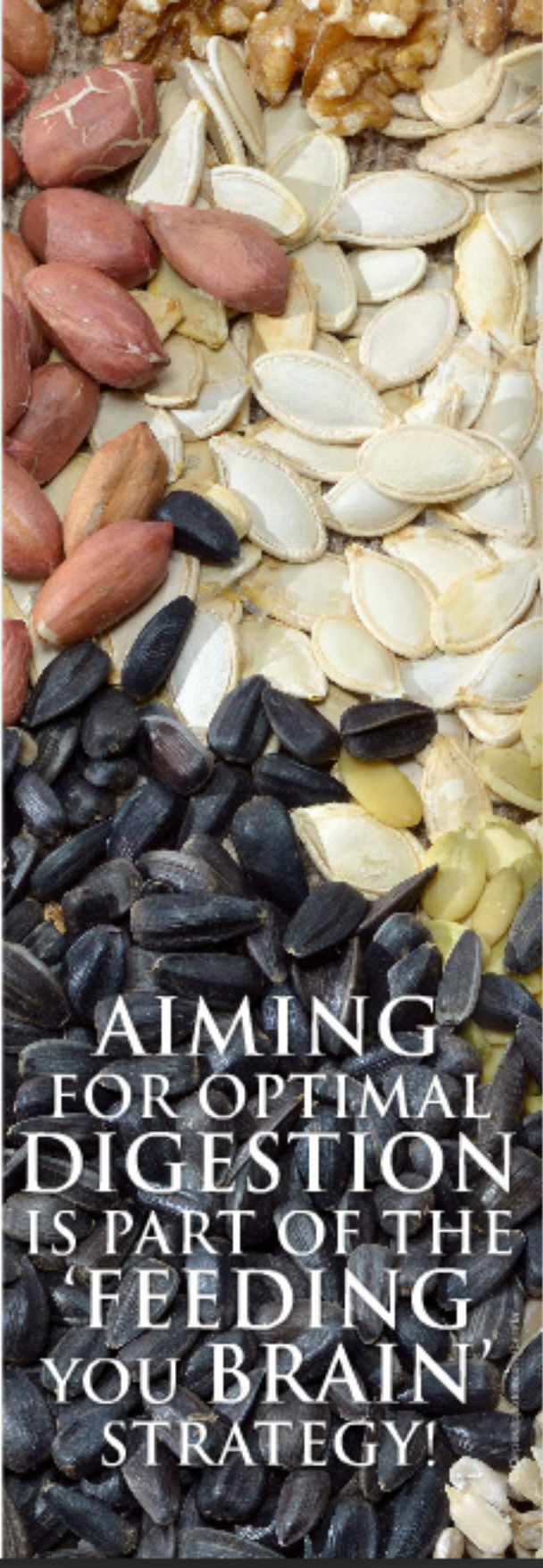
These two foundational nutrients, along with the fats discussed in *Feeding Your Brain Part 1*, support brain communication by:

- facilitating neuronal membrane flexibility and electrical potential via the right fats
- providing energy via the right carbohydrates for neuronal communication
- enabling neurotransmitter production and signaling via protein

Also the brain requires specific vitamins and minerals and is adversely affected by specific food additives as well as food intolerances.

OPTIMAL DIGESTION:

Digestion of these nutrients is critically important. Although we are all aware of the saying that 'you are what you eat,' it would be more accurate to say that 'you are what you absorb!' When the digestion of our food is compromised, due to a variety of factors, the potential value of the nutrients that we consume is severely hampered and influences brain function in fundamental ways.



AIMING FOR OPTIMAL DIGESTION IS PART OF THE 'FEEDING YOU BRAIN' STRATEGY!

CONCLUSION

The structure of your neuronal membranes can be improved by:

- consuming more nuts & seeds, flax & hemp seeds, high in omega-3 fats
- introducing undamaged forms of omega-6 fats, sunflower & sesame seeds
- including organic & unrefined EFA oil blends to your diet
- eliminating refined carbohydrates
- consuming more nutrient-dense, fiber-filled carbohydrates
- including plenty of green vegetables
- consuming clean forms of protein
- improving your digestion

These steps will support stable blood glucose levels, improved liver and digestive functioning and provide protein for neurotransmitter synthesis.

The impact of these simple adjustments will provide your brain with flexibility, sustained energy and the right building blocks to support improved mental health and well-being. Remember, your brain is your greediest and most sophisticated organ and it has the potential to support you wonderfully, if you provide it with the best brain food that you can find!

Delia McCabe, MPsy, is a PhD candidate in nutritional neuroscience, researching the relationship between specific nutrients and female stress levels. Her book Feed Your Brain - 7 Steps to a Lighter, Brighter You! is available below. Visit Delia at her [website](#).

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by Delia McCabe

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