



What is the MIND diet, and is it right for you?

In our journey towards optimal health, it's crucial to consider not just how food affects our body, but also how it can enhance our brain health. Enter the MIND diet, a revolutionary approach that marries the best of the Mediterranean and DASH diets to offer an eating plan designed to protect the brain.

What is the MIND Diet?

MIND stands for **Mediterranean-DASH Intervention for Neurodegenerative Delay**, and it's designed to reduce the risk of dementia and slow brain health decline. This diet emphasizes plant-based foods while limiting animal products and foods high in saturated fat. It encourages the consumption of berries and green leafy vegetables, both highly nutrient-dense foods, for optimal cognitive health.

Why is it a Good Choice?

Adopting the MIND diet is a proactive step towards maintaining cognitive function and preventing Alzheimer's disease. While it shares similarities with the Mediterranean and DASH diets, its focused recommendation on brain-boosting foods sets it apart, making it an excellent choice for anyone looking to support their brain health through diet.

What Does the Research Say?

Research supports the MIND diet's potential in preventing cognitive decline. Studies highlight the benefits of flavonoid-rich berries and leafy greens in slowing cognitive aging and reducing factors associated with Alzheimer's disease, such as inflammation and oxidative stress.

Here is a sample day of MIND meals and snacks.

Breakfast: Oatmeal topped with strawberries and almonds

Snack: A handful of nuts and blueberries

Lunch: Grilled chicken or chickpea salad with a variety of leafy greens and olive oil dressing

Snack: Whole grain crackers w/hummus or bean dip

Dinner: Salmon with quinoa and steamed kale

What are the Main Foods?

The MIND diet encourages:

- **Green leafy vegetables** (e.g., kale, spinach) – at least six servings a week
- **Nuts** – at least five servings a week
- **Berries** – at least two servings a week
- **Beans** – at least three servings a week
- **Whole grains** – at least three servings a day
- **Fish and poultry** – weekly
- **Olive oil** as the primary fat source
- **Wine** in moderation
- **Limit consumption** of red meat, butter, cheese, sweets, and fried or fast food to protect your brain health.

Need help getting started?

First, head to the Diet ID platform, hhclifestylemed.dietid.com, take the assessment again, and in the health goals section, be sure to click on "support brain health." On the next screen, be sure to select the MIND diet. From there, you will be able to download a sample meal plan and participate in food challenges that will help you achieve success with the MIND plan.

Embracing the MIND diet can be a delicious and fulfilling way to support your brain health. By focusing on these nutrient-rich foods, not only can you potentially safeguard your cognitive function, but you'll also enjoy a plethora of flavors and health benefits.

Colorful Kale and Sweet Potato Bowl



This quick lunch or side dish is packed with nutrients known to support brain health. This recipe serves 1 or 2; it easily scales up if you would like to prepare multiple servings.

You will need:

- 1 medium sweet potato, sliced in 1-inch wedges
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil, divided
- ¼ tsp salt (omit if you're on a low-sodium plan)
- ½ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- ¼ tsp paprika
- 4 cups chopped kale, loosely packed (chop into bite-sized pieces)
- Salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup pistachios, crushed

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. In a large bowl, toss sliced sweet potatoes with 1 tbsp of the olive oil. Add the salt (if using) and spices, toss well to coat, and transfer to a baking sheet lined with parchment paper, arranging in one layer. Do NOT scrape the oil from the bowl just yet!

Bake for 20 minutes, flipping the sweet potatoes halfway through.

While the sweet potatoes bake, add another tbsp olive oil to the bowl you used to toss the sweet potatoes, and add the kale. Mix well, scraping up extra seasoned oil from the bowl. Season with salt and pepper and mix well. For the best result, use your hands to mix, and massage the kale with your fingers.

When the 20 minutes are up, pull out the sheet, move sweet potatoes to one side, and add the kale on the other side. Bake for another 4-5 minutes.

Remove from the oven and transfer to a serving bowl. Garnish with the pistachios and enjoy!