



DIETING



7 Reasons You Should Do a Mini-Fast

RODALE WELLNESS NOW

BRAIN HEALTH



Are You Eating This Anti-Alzheimer's Trio?

See how certain foods can heal your brain.
by DAVID PERLMUTTER, MD



Learn the 8 principles of greatness to
create the building blocks for a better life!

FREE & ONLINE FROM
NOV. 16-23, 2015

ATTEND

MEDITATION



A Meditation for Compassion

Try this meditation to avoid falling into
harmful ego traps.
by LISSA RANKIN, MD

BRAIN HEALTH

Are You Eating This Anti-Alzheimer's Trio?

Is Alzheimer's actually an auto-immune disease? See how food can heal.

by DAVID PERLMUTTER, MD • November 3, 2015



PHOTO BY THINKSTOCK



According to the Alzheimer's Association, [5.3 million Americans](#) suffer from Alzheimer's disease (AD) or some other form of dementia. Given that November is Alzheimer's Awareness Month, what better time to examine all of the things we can do to help prevent this and other neurodegenerative disorders?

One of the key ways to help prevent this disease is through diet. I am often asked to highlight what I would consider to be the three items we should all be working into our diets more frequently to help support better brain health. Not knowing how popular it would later become, I outlined my "Anti-Alzheimer's Trio," three foods high in brain-healthy fat: grass-fed beef, [avocados](#), and coconut oil.

These foods are all low in carbs and high in fat, helping to reduce some of that brain-bullying inflammation—the root cause of so many ailments. Specifically, coconut oil is known as a rich source of beta-HBA and is one of our brain's "superfuels."

You may wonder why I highlight grass-fed beef instead of all beef, and the reason is simple: Cows that are fed grains instead of grass have meat that becomes higher in inflammation-producing omega-6 fats than their grass-fed counterparts. In addition, the majority of the corn and grain fed to cattle is overwhelmingly genetically modified,

and this introduces worrisome proteins into non-grass-fed meat. Grass-fed may sometimes be a bit more expensive, but it's smarter to buy it whenever you can.

In addition to the three foods listed above, other foods you should consider adding to your diet in order to prevent neurodegenerative disorders include probiotics, prebiotics, and fermented foods. Probiotics and prebiotics help maintain a healthy balance of bacteria in your gut—an influential part of the body known as the human microbiome (HM).

[Emerging studies](#) indicate that the HM may contribute to the regulation of multiple neurochemical and neuro-metabolic pathways through a complex series of highly interactive and symbiotic host-microbiome signaling systems. These systems mechanistically interconnect the gastrointestinal tract, skin, liver, and other organs with the central nervous system. Which brings me to autoimmune diseases.

Research has shown that [Alzheimer's disease can be added to the long list of autoimmune diseases](#) we face today. Specifically, Alzheimer's can be caused in part by an impairment of the blood-brain barrier (BBB). The BBB is a selectively permeable barrier that, when functioning correctly, allows for the selective transport of molecules like glucose and amino acids, which are crucial to neural function. If the BBB is compromised, it will allow neurotoxins to pass through, which could cause an autoimmune reaction.

More: [Common Drugs Linked to Alzheimer's Disease](#)

The good news is that there is a way to prevent or even reverse autoimmune responses and disorders. The first step is to determine if you are having autoimmune reactivity. Your physician can order blood tests like those from Cyrex Laboratories. Tests like these can help your physician determine if you are having an autoimmune response to environmental triggers like food or chemicals. The Cyrex Laboratories [Array 20](#) can specifically test for BBB permeability.

The first step to preventing Alzheimer's disease is consuming the right foods; the second is educating yourself about your potential autoimmune triggers. Once your physician has the results of your tests, he or she can outline a plan to get you back on track from a nutritional standpoint, and hopefully reverse your autoimmune responses through the removal of the trigger.

Tags: [ALZHEIMER'S](#) [GUT HEALTH](#) [NUTRITION](#) [DEMENTIA](#)