



YOUR HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2020 VOLUME 2 ISSUE 12

Give Your Brain A Boost

What are you feeding your brain?

March is Brain Injury Awareness month. Our brain is the most complex organ in our bodies, it is important to keep it healthy. We rely on our brains for so much, even the things we do not think about, such as breathing. What we feed our brain can make a big difference in the overall function of our brain, as well as impact the future health of our brain as we age. We rely on our brains to preserve homeostasis, keeping our bodily systems in balance to promote everyday function. For example, our bodies balance can be easily thrown off by eating processed foods that are high in trans-fat and sugar, which can deprive the body of essential nutrients required to work efficiently and effectively. Consequences of this may include fatigue, changes in behavior and mood, difficulty with learning, poor memory, and potentially long-term impacts of irreversible nerve degeneration/brain damage. When you eat foods that are processed, oxygen flow is reduced due to the hard plaque deposits that are formed in the arteries.

What does your brain need to thrive? Well just like most living species, it needs water, fuel, oxygen, sleep, and sunlight. These things promote energy for optimal performance and generation of new brain cells (called *neurogenesis*). The brain is capable of rewiring itself (called *neuroplasticity*), so proper nutrition is needed in order to promote recovery.



COMMUNITY EVENTS NEAR ROCKFORD

Wheeling Warriors

Meetup LBBRG

3/18/20 12:00-1:00 PM

Common Threads LBBRG

3/18/20 4:00-5:30 PM

Art Party \$15/person

Send RSVP to Sara

SRoach@LbbRehab.com

Caregiver's Table LBBRG

3/25/20 4:00-5:00 PM

Caregiver's Series

5/1/20 5:30-8:00 PM

5/2/20 9:00 AM-3:00 PM

Register for this free

event:

[https://caregivers-series-](https://caregivers-series-lbbrg.eventbrite.com)

[lbbrg.eventbrite.com](https://caregivers-series-lbbrg.eventbrite.com)

Adaptive Sports

Kentwood Parks & Rec

Leisure Club

Contact Katelyn

bushk@kentwood.us

2020 West Michigan ALS Symposium

4/16/20 Register:

<http://webmi.alsa.org/site/>

[Calendar?](http://webmi.alsa.org/site/Calendar?)

[id=229055&view=Detail](http://webmi.alsa.org/site/Calendar?id=229055&view=Detail)

Give Your Brain A Boost (continued)

Our brains need water. When you don't get enough water, it can make you feel sluggish, confused, and unable to function. By increasing water intake, you can improve your cognition.

Our brains need exercise. When you exercise regularly, it allows your brain to make new brain cells in the hippocampus where memory is stored, as well as increasing communication between the hippocampus and forefront of the brain where executive functioning occurs.

On the flip side, your brain needs rest. Sleep needs will vary from person to person; some may require more hours of sleep than others. If you miss out on your sleep, you may find yourself making more mistakes or poor decisions. During periods of illness or injury, your body will need more rest, as your body may require more energy for healing and recovery.

The human brain relies on certain nutrients to stay healthy such as protein, vitamins, minerals, essential fatty acids, and antioxidants. See below for a list of nutrient dense foods. Keep in mind the best source of Vitamin D is the sun. If you are deficient in Vitamin D (< 30 ng/ml), your doctor may put you on replacement.

When you are deficient in nutrients over a long period of time, you put yourself at risk for irreversible damage and neurodegeneration.



Nutrient Dense Foods for the Brain

Essential Fatty Acids

- Omega-3: mackerel, salmon, seabass, oysters, sardines, shrimp, trout, seaweed, chia seeds, flaxseeds, walnuts, edamame, kidney beans
- Omega-6: sunflower seeds, beef, eggs, brazil nuts, sesame seeds, pumpkin seeds

Antioxidants

- berries, kale, pecans, dark chocolate, beans, beets, spinach, red cabbage
- curcumin (found in spice turmeric, in curry dishes)

Vitamin B (B6 & B12)

- protein rich foods, meat, beans, leafy greens, bananas, eggs, milk, fish, cereal

Other Mineral-rich foods

- sweet potato, avocado, legumes, leafy greens, nuts, seeds

References:

Brain foods. (2012). *Nutrition & Food Science*, 42(3). doi: 10.1108/nfs.2012.01742caa.010
Morley, John. (2010). Nutrition and the Brain. *Clinics in Geriatric Medicine*, 1(26). pp 89-98

COMMUNITY EVENTS FOR TC

PWR! Class LBBRG

Weekly Thursdays 4-5 PM

Wellness Exercise Class LBBRG

Weekly Tuesdays 2-3 PM

Caregiver's Table LBBRG

3/17/20 4:00-5:00 PM

Fun and Games LBBRG

3/17/20 4:00-5:00 PM

Common Threads LBBRG

3/19/20 5:30 PM

Spring Renewal Yoga

\$10/person - All Abilities

ALSA Support Group

LBBRG 3/25/20

11:45 AM - 1 PM

PNN Support Group

3/3/20 6:00 PM Foster

Family Community Health
Center

3/26/20 10:00 AM Senior

Center

TBI Support Group

3/10/20 5:00 PM Foster

Family Community Health
Center

Susan Mast ALS

Bethlehem Lutheran

Church

3/11/20 2-3:30 PM

GT Stroke Club

Presbyterian Church

3/11/20 2:30-4:30 PM

Amputee Support Group

Disability Network of

Northern MI 3/11/20 5:45-

7:00 pm