

The best breakfast foods for your baby's brain development

SPHINGOMYELIN IN MILK

ARTICLE

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Boost your child's cognitive power with nutrient-rich foods to give their brain a head start. Early brain development is vital as it will affect how their brains work for the rest of their lives.

One of the simplest ways involves feeding kids the right 'brain foods' from an early age, so that their brain gets a head start.

Every parent wants their child to live up to their full intellectual potential. While there are certain things that you can't control – such as their genetic make-up – there are some things parents can do to boost their child's cerebral power.

One of the simplest ways involves feeding kids the right 'brain foods' from an early age, so that their brain gets a head start – even before they start school.

The first thousand days of a baby's life is extremely important when it comes to brain development.¹ How the brain develops during this period affects how a person's brain works for the rest of their life.

And it's not just about academic excellence; this is also crucial for other functions such as a child's memory, impulses/mood and how they think and feel. What your child eats plays a big part in this process; food does contribute to brain development.

Here's how you can start their day right by giving them these beneficial brain-boosting foods at breakfast.

Eggs

Not only are eggs high in protein, they're also a good source of Vitamin D. Plus, they contain choline, an important element for brain health that supports overall mental functioning. It contributes to your child's brain's structure and has been proven to

improve memory too.²

Try to introduce eggs to your child before they turn one, but be cautious if anyone from your family has an egg allergy. Make hard-boiled or scrambled eggs for breakfast – mash them up if your baby is not on solids yet.

Avocados

Your baby needs to start their day with a number of beneficial nutrients for their brain, including potassium and vitamin K, as well as monounsaturated fat. Young children need these healthy fats for brain development.³

While hipsters love their 'smashed avo' on toast, your baby will enjoy this fruit mashed up. It's a popular first food for babies thanks to its soft texture so you can give them to your child as soon as they start eating pureed food.

Blueberries

It's often touted as a superfood, and for good reason too. Blueberries are bursting with antioxidants, which protect the brain from damage caused by free radicals – basically any normal wear and tear that takes place.⁴

Start the day with a pureed form of this fruit or look for baby food with natural blueberry flavouring. If your child is older, cut up whole blueberries (beware of choking hazards) for their morning dose.

Greek yoghurt

Yoghurt is a healthy choice at any time of the day for overall health, and is especially beneficial for the immune system. Choose Greek yoghurt for your child, as it has a rich, creamy texture they will love; you can also add extra flavours or fruits to improve variety over the week.

Greek yoghurt is also filled with healthy fats, which are beneficial for the development of your child's brain cells. The best part is, it's an easy breakfast dish to serve as there's not much preparation involved.

A glass of milk

Children get a number of benefits from milk and it's an essential food in their growing years, especially for their calcium needs. But did you know that choosing a formula milk with the right ingredients can boost their brain power too? Ingredients like sphingomyelin are invaluable for the brain connections that are developing in your little one.

A process known as myelination enables lightning-fast communication between neurons in the brain, which contributes to your child's cognitive development. This results in improved memory, intelligence and language skills.

The process involves the nerve fibres in the brain being coated with a sphingomyelin-rich myelin sheath.⁵

Therefore, the higher the sphingomyelin content in your child's diet, the more often this process takes place. Other brain-boosting ingredients to look out for in formula milk include DHA and choline, both essential micronutrients that work together to improve memory.⁶

References:

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