

You're about to take one of the most important tests of your life, are you mentally prepared? Satellite will provide you with the tools to ensure you have all the knowledge and learning materials you need but have you thought about how well your brain is operating to absorb all of this information? There are certain things each of us can do make sure our brains are operating in tip top shape. Here are some things to focus on.

Water

Our brains are made up of 90% water, and dehydration is one of the leading causes of memory problems. Make sure you are drinking enough water on a daily basis. Shoot for 6 to 8 glasses a day. Unfortunately soda doesn't count, sorry!

Almonds

Almonds are believed to improve memory according to recent studies. If a combination of almond oil (easy to find at a local vitamin store or Whole Foods type grocery) and milk is taken before going to bed or upon getting up in the morning, it strengthens our memory power! You can also buy almond milk at your local health food store and use it in place of your regular milk.

Apple Juice (all natural 100% juice)

Research from the University of Massachusetts Lowell indicates that apple juice increases the production of the essential neurotransmitter acetylcholine in the brain, resulting in increased memory power.

Reduce Sugar and White Flour Intake

Avoid white flour and sugar, both of which cause blood sugar to quickly spike and then plummet, leaving you tired and moody. Focus on whole grain bread and snacks that don't contain artificial sweeteners and processed ingredients that you can't pronounce. When you are hungry after school, reach for a banana and a small handful of almonds instead of chips and cookies. The banana contains potassium, which helps prevent stiffness that comes from sitting at a desk in school all day, while the almonds contain healthy fat and protein that will stave off hunger until dinner. Other nutrient-rich nuts include hazelnuts, cashews, and Brazil nuts. These nuts contain magnesium, a mineral that's crucial for converting sugar into energy. Brazil nuts contain selenium, an antioxidant linked to preventing moodiness.

Vitamin B

Vitamin B-complex has been proven to strengthen memory power. Eat food and vegetables high in Vitamin B-complex such as tuna fish, oats, turkey, sweet potatoes, avocados and beans.

Day Before and Day of Test:

Be sure to hydrate plenty the day before the test. Try to minimize or cut off fluids after 8pm. You want to make sure you are sleeping the night before, not getting up for bathroom breaks! When you wake up on test day, down a full glass of water. It's been 8 or 9 hours since you hydrated and your brain is thirsty! Breakfast and snacks are your fuel for the day of the exam. You want to make sure you focus on whole foods (meaning food in its natural state, not food that required factories or processing plants).

Here is a comprehensive list of some great breakfast and snack ideas. Ideally you want a nice balance of grains, vegetables and proteins. Be sure to balance any sweets with some protein. You don't want to crash and burn on your big day!

Breakfast suggestions:

- Oats (real, not micro-waved) with nuts, sunflower seeds and dried or fresh fruit (berries are best) Sweeten with honey or real maple syrup
- Eggs scrambled with spinach, tomatoes or any other veggies, with a little all-natural cheese
- Whole grain toast with peanut butter and an apple drizzled with honey
- All-natural plain yogurt with natural granola. Customize with honey, nuts, seeds and dried fruit

Snack suggestions (no need for refrigeration):

- Almonds or mixed nuts, Trail mix – make a custom blend of nuts, seeds and dried fruit
- Carrots and hummus
- Organic cheese sticks
- Whole wheat bread sandwich with smashed avocado and a little sea salt
- Yam chips – slice thinly and bake on baking sheet with olive oil, salt and pepper for 20-25 minutes at 350 degrees
- Edamame
- Garden of Eatin' Blue Corn Chips
- Rice cakes with nut butter (try almond, peanut or cashew butter)

Good luck!

Robyn Youkilis
Health Counselor

646-373-7164

robyn@yourhealthiestyou.com