

# Highlighting Dr. Barnard's Power Foods for the Brain

A Brief Nutritional Guide



Nate Richardson

[RichardsonStudies.com](http://RichardsonStudies.com)

## About Dr. Barnard

Neal Barnard, MD, FACC, is an **Adjunct Professor of Medicine** at the George Washington University School of Medicine in Washington, DC, and **President** of the Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine.

See <https://www.pcrm.org/about-us/staff/neal-barnard-md-face>

## About this Book

These are highlights from the book, but they do not cover all the concepts. They are written in my own words and based on my understanding and may not accurately represent the author's intended message. Some parts have been moved around and placed outside their original chapter for topical convenience, and chapter titles have been abbreviated. Don't miss the entire book for a deeper wealth of health wisdom!

Visit RichardsonStudies.com for the free PDF of this booklet. A paperback of this booklet is available at minimal printing cost on Amazon.com.



## Contents

Toxic Metals.....	4
Harmful Fats and Cholesterol.....	7
Vitamins.....	9
Mental Exercises.....	11
Physical Exercise.....	12
Sleep.....	14
Medications.....	15
Menu.....	18
Cravings.....	23
Bonus Lecture Highlights: Veganism for Health.	27

## Toxic Metals

We need very few metals; when we eat animals, we ingest all the metals they ingested, and they have ingested all the metals from the other animals they consumed. Breakfast cereals also are fortified with too many of these metals. Vegetables, beans, and whole grains have plenty of metals, etc. Vegetarians get plenty of copper and zinc. This has surprised the researchers, and they're having to change their narrative, as they used to warn vegetarians that they might not have enough copper and zinc. It's those who eat animals that often have excessive levels. Nutrition from plant sources is the safest way to stay in the healthy zone.

Aluminum is in tap water.

Aluminum pots get aluminum in your food.

High aluminum counties have 50% greater rates of Alzheimer's. The link between aluminum and brain damage has been downplayed in the past, but new research confirms that not only is it toxic, but the

levels you encounter from tap water and the use of everyday items are not good. Controversy remains, but error on the side of caution.

The simpler the food, the more confident you can be in it. Foods from the produce aisle have only one ingredient. Avoid pizzas full of fat and cholesterol.

Lobsters and crabs have tons of metals, as do other animals.

Get aluminum-free baking soda; don't let aluminum foil touch acidic foods. The longer soda sits in an aluminum can, the more dangerous it is.

There's a lot of aluminum in tea.

A reverse osmosis water filter gets rid of aluminum.

There are other ways we take metals into our bodies. Standard antiperspirants contain aluminum, which passes through the skin and into the bloodstream. Mercury tooth fillings might also increase the amount of mercury getting into the brain.

If you have an ulcer, the best treatment is an antibiotic, not an antacid, as bacteria cause ulcers.

It is wise to get a supplement containing only vitamins, not minerals, since people go overboard on the minerals. You need some copper, iron, and zinc but no aluminum.

Avoid excessive copper, iron, and zinc; you don't need any aluminum. You avoid most of these metals on a plant-based diet and get the small amount of copper, iron, and zinc you need without the excess in animal products. If your multivitamin has copper, zinc, and iron, like most multivitamins, get a healthier one at a health food store. Try a B complex multivitamin. If you are eating plenty of fruit, vegetables, and nuts, you only need a B12 supplement.

Don't use aluminum or iron cookware. Beware of eating out because you may not know what cookware was used. Aluminum is often used in cheese toppings on pizzas and in single-serve coffee creamer or salt packets.

Bottled spring water is safer than tap water unless your tap water is tested and is free of aluminum or if you're using a reverse osmosis purifier, which

removes aluminum. Avoid aluminum cans, including soda and beer cans.

## Harmful Fats and Cholesterol

People in the blue zones (where people live the longest) often eat little to no meat and dairy.

In a study with hundreds of people, those who didn't eat meat were 1/3 less likely to get Alzheimer's. The more saturated and trans-fat you have every day, the more likely you'll get Alzheimer's.

HDL carries cholesterol away, so if you have very low cholesterol, it's not necessarily bad to have low HDL.

Vegetables like broccoli have omega-3 fat ALA, which the body converts into the essential DHA. If you want, you can get a DHA supplement. Try to get the vegetarian version derived from algae rather than the other kind derived from fish.

Omega-3 supplements and fish oil supplements don't help prevent Alzheimer's; however, slimmer people have less risk of Alzheimer's.

Fish is more like beef than broccoli. It's primarily fat; there's some good fat, but it's about 80% bad fat and cholesterol. Some studies show that fish is good because it's better than other animals, but it is not a main staple in the blue zones.

The Mediterranean diet is pretty good if you skip the fish and oils. Many people do well on this diet because of the increased veggies.

Use a body mass index calculator to see if you're in a healthy weight range. The healthy range of BMI is 18.5 to 25.

*Note: I recall that blue zones are lower on that spectrum, at 23. Dr. Fuhrman talks about how our expectations have lowered, and a truly healthy BMI is more like 23 at the top.*

If you need to lose weight, don't bother counting calories. Eat more vegetables, fruits, legumes, and whole grains. Avoid animal products and oily foods, and your weight will adjust itself easily.



When you lose weight, your blood flows better, so your heart doesn't have to work so hard, and your blood pressure will decrease. Potassium also lowers blood pressure.



## Vitamins

Vitamin E is an antioxidant that protects against free radicals. Free radicals attack the brain. While other body cells will reproduce, brain cells will not, so protect your brain.

Getting vitamin E in food rather than pills is ideal, partly because pills usually only have one form of

vitamin E. Nuts and seeds are a great source of vitamin E. Peanuts. Cashews have more saturated fat than other types of nuts and seeds. To avoid overeating nuts and seeds, use them as an ingredient, not a snack.

Folate, B6, and B12 are very important.

The following was learned in a study of 20,000 people over 6 years: 1) Eating an apple daily can cut your stroke risk in half. 2) Sweet potatoes reduce heart problems. 3) Orange fruits and vegetables from the beta carotene reduce heart problems.

Some have suggested that some amount of wine helps; it could be to counteract unhealthy foods. Those who eat healthily do not benefit from wine. Even one drink of alcohol a day increases a woman's risk of breast cancer.

Some have suggested the benefits of caffeine. It is controversial, and there are known dangers.

Dr. Benjamin Spock, who ate healthily and recovered his health in his 80s, was tempted by a steak at a restaurant. After eating it, he lost energy

and couldn't sleep well. He also learned that dairy is not important for children.

## Mental Exercises

Bilingual people don't get cognitive problems until 5 years later than others. The more languages you speak, the better. What counts is actively using those foreign languages, not just taking a class on it once upon a time.

We can remember unrelated things by connecting them through mental images. When you meet someone and learn their name, you can't just toss it aside, thinking you'll remember it later. You need to link it to something.

See the book *Remember Every Name Every Time: Corporate America's Memory Master Reveals His Secrets* by Benjamin Levy.

See the book *Use Your Perfect Memory: Dramatic New Techniques for Improving Your Memory* by Tony Buzan.

Toxic foods and excess fat can destroy your memories.

Give your brain stimulation by reading, puzzles, word games, math games, and social interaction.



## Physical Exercise

Those who exercise are far less likely to have Alzheimer's and strokes. Regular exercise increases brain cells and grows your brain. Exercise protects us against the brain shrinking that comes with old age.

Exercise a brisk walk for a short time, then increase the time. It's more about keeping your heart rate up than distance. Don't push it so hard that you can't talk or breathe.

If you can make exercise social, that dramatically helps; companionship is a significant part of what makes physical activity fun. You're more likely to do it if people are expecting you.

Put exercise on your schedule so it happens—treat it like a doctor's appointment you won't miss.

Exercise is like an antibiotic—taking one dose doesn't help much. Yoga and Pilates are flexibility exercises that help decrease pain. (*Note: I'd say Pilates is much better than yoga.*) Aerobic exercise is best for brain and heart health. Strength exercise strengthens muscles and bones.

Exercise is an antidepressant, about as effective as medication.

You can't out-exercise a bad diet; the exercise won't eliminate the cholesterol. Even if you're too out of shape to exercise, you can lose weight from a good diet.

*Note: I know many people who know little to nothing about nutrition and insist exercise is the only way to lose weight. It's a good start, but exercising without proper nutrition is like putting a Band-Aid on an injury that gets reopened daily.*

Cortisol from stress interferes with memory.

## Sleep

People who go to bed earlier are skinnier.

Things you learn during the day are solidified at night as you sleep. Turn off the lights at 10:00 p.m. and let your brain repair. However, many sleeping medications wipe out memory.

Protein foods will keep you awake, so have less at dinner and more at breakfast. Alcohol also makes for a rough night's sleep.

Stretching before sleep, like animals, improves sleep.



## Medications

Doctors give patients Versed after a colonoscopy; it makes them forget the whole procedure even if they were awake during it.

Only when you stop the medication does your memory gradually return.

Taking an antidepressant (like Xanax) or an allergy medication that blocks acetylcholine can cause build-up and block way too much. Even antidepressants that don't affect acetylcholine affect memory.

Statins (to lower cholesterol) like Lipitor are the most prescribed drugs, and they can cause heart, liver, memory, and brain problems.

New drugs come on the market every year, but their full range of side effects is often not known for several years after that. Investors understand that the big money is in medicines used for life, so they're focused on developing those.

Manufacturers of drugs for ailments such as cholesterol and diabetes are not required to disclose that consumers wouldn't need their drug if they followed a plant-based diet.

If you suspect a gluten sensitivity problem, go without gluten for a few weeks to test it and see if your symptoms disappear. Eliminating gluten will not benefit you if you don't have gluten sensitivity.

*Note—I recall that there may be issues with wheat products treated with pesticides, so eliminating gluten means eliminating the pesticides. Scripture says wheat is the staff of life (Doctrine and Covenants 89), so hopefully, you can find healthy wheat products.*

Women going through menopause often experience temporary difficulty in concentration and difficulty in learning, but these return to normal in time.



Hormone replacement therapy increases the risk of dementia, stroke, and cancer.

Long-term alcohol use destroys memory.

Even briefly, a lack of oxygen to the brain can cause significant memory loss.

Chemotherapy makes your brain cells not work as well; it can be more dangerous to brain cells than cancer cells.

People with diabetes are at higher risk of stroke and Alzheimer's. Those with blood sugars in the diabetic range are 74% more likely to develop dementia, and those with sugars in the pre-diabetic range are 33% more likely to develop dementia. The best diet for diabetes is a plant-based, animal-free diet low on oils and focusing on foods low on the glycemic index.



## Menu

A healthy diet won't just help you lose a few pounds. It will dramatically change your life, reverse diseases, and stop the need for medication.

People often eat the same bland foods: meat, potatoes, and corn. When we start eating plant-based foods, we discover the variety of nature's blessings.

The healthy BMI range is 18.5 to 25. People who eat meat daily average 28.8. The average BMI is 27.3 for people who eat meat less than once a week. People who ate no meat but the occasional fish were thinner still. Those who left out all meat and fish but still had dairy were thinner. The only group

in the middle of the healthy weight range were those who skipped animal products altogether.

Narrowed arteries can open again when we change our lifestyle. Cruciferous vegetables cleanse the blood.

Bitter food can become delicious when you mix some sour with it. Lemon juice on salads and green vegetables is good. And there are many fat-free salad dressings.

If the fruit sticker (PLU code) starts with an I, it's organic. If it begins with any other number, it's conventionally grown. If it starts with an eight, it is genetically modified.

When you have a bunch of bad fats, the omega-6s compete with the omega-3s, so the omega-3s from the vegetables can't turn into the DHA you need.

Cut your fruits and vegetables into bite-size pieces in a bowl, and you will be much more likely to eat them that way. Serve nuts too, but a small handful (about one oz.) is all you need daily.

Limit oils in cooking. Steam vegetables to add flavor without fat. Sauté in vegetable broth or water

instead of oil. You can even sauté them in a dry pan. Baked is better than fried. If you're getting a pre-made frozen meal, get the ones with less than 3 grams of fat per serving.

For a vitamin-rich diet, eat vegetables (especially green leafy vegetables), beans, and fruits, with some nuts sprinkled on your salad.

When taking Warfarin, a blood clot preventer, people often are told to avoid eating vegetables. The real goal is to keep the number of vegetables you eat steady so your doctor can give you the appropriate dose.

Lowering your cholesterol is good for your brain and your heart. Some foods help to lower cholesterol, such as oats, but don't use instant or quick oats. Use the old-fashioned or steel cut. Add cinnamon, bananas, strawberries, or other fruit. Don't use cow milk if you want creamy; let them cook in the water first or use almond milk or soy milk.

Beans and barley lower cholesterol again due to the soluble fiber. Soy, almonds, and walnuts also help lower cholesterol. Some margarines have this effect

as well. Those who eat almonds and walnuts regularly have lower cholesterol.

You need carbohydrate-rich vegetables, beans, and grains to live long. Carbs only have four calories per gram compared with nine calories per gram in fats. Carbs get a bad name because we tend to combine them with greasy, fatty foods like cookies, pies, and cakes. It's the stick of butter or shortening that gets you high calories. (*Note: 1 stick of butter has the calories of 100 cups of vegetables.*)

Brown rice has lots of fiber, but the fiber is mainly gone when the outer layer is removed and turned into white rice. The same is true with wheat when it is refined into white flour. You want whole grains with their natural bran.

Most fruits have a low glycemic index and do not spike blood sugar. Also, choose low-glycemic-index yams and sweet potatoes rather than white potatoes. Puffed cereals have a high glycemic index. Go for oatmeal and bran cereal.

At sandwich shops, skip the meat and cheese and use a vinaigrette. At pizza shops, skip the meat and cheese and keep the veggies.

Do a three-week health food challenge using healthy foods, and you will see the results. (*Note: This is like Daniel's test. The wise will see the benefits and keep the habits.*)

There is shelf-stable tofu, which will last longer than the water-based.

The US government recommends a B12 supplement for everyone over 50, and it's best for everyone, any age, any diet. Beware of multivitamin supplements, which have lots of heavy metal minerals. If you need a DHA supplement, choose non-fish.

Get 20 minutes of direct sunlight on the skin daily for the amount of vitamin D needed. If you are indoors most of the day, take a vitamin D supplement.

*Note: Dr. Fuhrman says the morning sun from 6-9 is the healthiest time for skin exposure due to the type of rays at that time.*



## Cravings

When people are high on drugs all the time, you can't communicate with them; they're in their own world.

The guy named Epstein, who was in charge of managing The Beatles so they did not do so many drugs that they couldn't perform, fell into the drugs himself.

Dopamine is what you get from all drugs and alcohol. Drugs give dopamine in such high doses that it makes people uninterested in everyday life, uninterested in food, sex, etc.

Today's foods are designed to be less like foods and more like drugs. Our cane sugar is pure, extracted, unnatural stuff. It's the same with chocolate - they extracted cocoa butter and combined it with butter and sugar, which became an unnatural, addictive food. These become irresistible, like heroin in small amounts.

Opiates from cow milk trigger dopamine release. Cheese is concentrated casein and delivers a higher dose of morphine. Cheese has more saturated fat, cholesterol, and sodium than steak.

Even though cheese and wine taste and smell bad, they trigger dopamine, so we keep returning for more.

Some people's genes require more dopamine than usual to feel normal. But no matter what genes you have, you can get addicted to food because people are designing it to be addictive.

*Note: Remember, D&C 89 says wicked people are conspiring against us and urges us to be very selective in our diet. It says to focus on fruits, vegetables, greens, and herbs. It should not be difficult to understand that we must avoid highly*



*processed foods. D&C 89 also says to use meat only sparingly, if at all. Many religions have long spoken in favor of limiting the use of meats, and now science is catching up to that true health principle that religions have taught for so long. God's goodness is seen in His revelations, which help us long before we discover them ourselves. The wise listen to God and don't wait for man to catch up with what God has already revealed.*

Comfort foods give opiates and dopamine. No one ever went to a convenience store at 9:00 p.m. to buy cauliflower. Don't get comfort from your food. Absolute comfort comes from developing friendships. Exercise also triggers dopamine naturally, so you will be less likely to turn to dopamine foods later in the day if you've exercised.

*Note: In 'How to Not Diet,' Dr. Gregor points out that milk is the only food in nature with sugar and fat in high concentrations together. Babies need to be drawn in a powerful way to keep coming back for more development, but if you aren't a baby, you don't need to mess with milk.*

Many people imagine they can have certain unhealthy foods occasionally. Still, it's easier if you set rules for yourself not to have unhealthy foods at all so they aren't teasing you. In theory, a little won't hurt, but each dose triggers more dopamine rush that reinforces the desire for it. Smokers know that teasing yourself with small amounts is more challenging than quitting. Moderation stokes the fire rather than letting it go out. We have been tricked into believing that we should have moderation in everything.

*Note: Once a person is well acquainted with the health benefits of eating right, doing so comes naturally, and food choices become obvious. The temptation to eat a halfway diet disappears when we learn the truth.*

## Bonus Lecture Highlights: Veganism for Health

Highlights from 6+ Ways a Vegan Diet Can Improve Your Health, from the Exam Room Live, Physicians Committee, Dr. Neal Barnard

<https://youtu.be/hUSNz70LqGc>

Arteries open up, erectile dysfunction goes away, heart attack goes away, stroke goes away.

White blood cells don't function well in a greasy oil environment, so if you're not eating animal products, you're not getting all that oil, grease, and fat, so your body can better fight off the common cold and other sicknesses.

Less Alzheimer's.

When you lose weight, it stays off. You're learning quality, not quantity.

It's ideal for weight loss. You don't have to count calories; your foods will naturally trigger you to

want fewer calories.

The bad saturated fat is in meat and dairy.

90% of people who are using Lipitor to decrease their cholesterol don't need it if they're not eating all that cholesterol in animal products.

Once you go plant-based, you stop craving junk food.

# Are You Helping Your Brain with Food?

Little adjustments to our daily routine can make a difference in memory and learning.

Enjoy these tips from Dr. Barnard on how to sharpen your intellect.

Don't let your food fight against your efforts to learn!

Some of the topics in this book include: Toxic Metals, Harmful Fats & Cholesterol, Vitamins, Mental Exercises, Physical Exercise, Sleep, Medications, Menus, Cravings, & Limiting Animal Products.

This summary booklet will help launch you into a healthier life and whet your appetite for further studies.