



ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE CHEST

HEALTHY BRAIN BOOSTERS



Sage:

Savory sage is packed with a multitude of healing plant compounds that offer a wide variety of brain health benefits. This herb delivers strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory actions, both of which protect brain cells. It also boosts neurotrophins, special proteins necessary for proper brain cell function and survival. At the same time, sage lowers levels of a potentially damaging protein called acetylcholinesterase, which breaks down acetylcholine, an important brain chemical that promotes communication between brain cells. Sage has also been found to reduce levels of amyloid-beta plaques, which are well known for their role in Alzheimer's disease. In human clinical trials, sage has been shown to effectively improve cognitive function, attention, alertness, memory, and mood. Even a single dose of sage can increase cognitive performance and reduce mental fatigue within 4 hours, with sage essential oil bringing similar effects in just 2.5 hours.



Your brain changes constantly, reacting to new situations and information to help you survive and thrive. But some of the natural changes that come with aging can lead to frustrating mental slow-downs. That's largely because the burdens of inflammation and oxidative stress—two chief enemies of brain health—increase as you get older. Those issues can result in everyday memory slips, difficulty concentrating, and cloudier thinking. Fortunately, you can recharge your brainpower, sharpen your memory, and enhance your mental clarity with five highly effective natural brain boosters.

Rosemary:

Since ancient times, rosemary has been closely connected to memory. This woody herb contains powerful plant compounds, including some with proven anti-inflammatory and antioxidant powers. Rosemary's brain-boosting benefits have been subject to several clinical trials with positive results, including the demonstrated ability to increase oxygenated blood supplies in the

brain and prevent brain cell death. A recent animal study found that

rosmarinic acid, a plant chemical found in rosemary, stops amyloid-beta plaque development in the brain. Carnosic acid, another potent plant compound in rosemary, protects brain cells from oxidative damage and shields them from injury caused by overexcited neurotransmitters (brain chemicals). Through those protective pathways, rosemary helps improve memory, clear thinking, and concentration. In a double-blind, placebo-controlled, pilot clinical trial, rosemary (combined with sage and melissa) improved verbal memory skills in older adults who were tasked with recalling lists of words. Other human studies have shown that rosemary helps improve memory speed and alertness. To give

your brain the optimal rosemary boost, look for concentrated plant oil rather than dried herb supplements.

More Power in a Lower Dose

Concentrated food-grade plant oils of sage and rosemary offer a higher level of brain benefits than their dried herb counterparts. Unlike the more commonly used essential oils that are not safe for internal use, these specially processed plant oils can be consumed safely in supplement form. Their higher potency allows for much lower doses than dry herbal extracts.



Vitamin D:

Vitamin D is called the “sunshine vitamin” for a good reason: Your body produces vitamin D when your skin absorbs direct sunlight. As you get older, though, your ability to create vitamin D declines by as much as 60 percent—and that can lead to a deficiency. In fact, according to recent research, nearly 85 percent of older adults have at least minor vitamin D deficiency, and as many as 43 percent have severe or very severe deficiency. Lower levels of vitamin D have been directly linked with mental decline and a significantly higher risk of developing Alzheimer’s disease or dementia. On the flip side, people with higher levels of vitamin D are connected with stronger recovery and less disability following strokes, as well as for people suffering from traumatic brain injuries. Vitamin D offers a lot in the way of brain protection, from encouraging new brain cell growth to clearing out amyloid-beta plaques. All of those protective effects work together to keep your brain young and sharp at any age.

Rhodiola:

Chronic stress poses a constant threat to your brain function—and rhodiola supplies the solution. Rhodiola is an adaptogen, a unique type of herb that balances the body’s response to stressors and limits the negative effects of stress. For more than 60 years, rhodiola has been widely studied and used in Eastern Europe to combat mental stress and the toll it can take on focus, memory, mood, and energy. Early research focused on how rhodiola affected brain health, revealing the plant’s ability to increase neurotransmitter (brain chemical) activity and reduce the damaging effects of stress. More recent research shows that rhodiola possesses strong antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, boosts the production of proteins that regulate antioxidant activity, and increases vital blood flow in the brain. A recent clinical trial found that rhodiola boosts brain plasticity—the ability of your brain to adapt, rewire, and recover from injury and damage. Those benefits allow rhodiola to relieve mental fatigue, enhance memory and learning, and improve work performance.

Curcumin:

Curcumin is the key healing compound found in turmeric that’s been used for culinary and medicinal purposes for thousands of years. This bright golden spice delivers two critical actions that protect and preserve brainpower. First, it reduces inflammation. Second, it decreases oxidative stress. Along with its clinically proven anti-inflammatory and antioxidant powers, curcumin has also been shown to improve brain blood flow, delivering essential nutrients and oxygen to brain cells. Recent human studies have found that curcumin improves cognition and memory in older adults. New research also points toward using this botanical compound to prevent or delay cognitive decline. If that weren’t enough, curcumin boosts new brain cell production, keeping your brain young and active no matter how old you are. Since curcumin is hard for the body to absorb, best results can be found by using a highly bioavailable form such as BCM-95 (also called Curcugreen), which has been clinically studied and found effective for protecting brainpower in older adults. In fact, an eye-opening clinical trial showed that when healthy older adults took daily doses of BCM-95 for 12 months they didn’t experience any cognitive decline, while a similar group taking a placebo didn’t see the same cognitive benefits.

