

# 7 More Ways To Grow & Repair Your Brain

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Tempus fugit! More than a year has past since we posted the first part of “7 Ways to Grow & Repair Your Brain.” And no better time to establish more healthy routines into your life than NOW. This article discusses 7 more ways to do this, including:

1. Eat more brain food and avoid processed carbohydrates
2. Move your body—walking, dancing, swimming, etc.
3. Get more sun exposure—without sunscreen
4. Live your passion—find things you're crazy about doing; and do them
5. Get more sleep
6. Change routines often
7. Perform respiratory biofeedback (AKA “The 5-Minute Power Break”)

**Brain Food.** Of course, a great diet is a necessity, and the foundation, for optimal brain function. There are at least six key nutritional factors that help the brain. Below is a summary.

- Eat sufficient amounts of healthy fats (the brain is 60% fat), preferably organic items: extra virgin olive and coconut oil, fresh raw nuts and seeds, avocados, wild fish, free-range meats, and eggs (the yolks). Balance fats too – starting with about two-thirds of the diet as monounsaturated fats (especially olive oil). The remainder of diet can be about equal amounts of saturated (coconut oil, meat and dairy), omega-3 (fish), and omega-6 fats (freshly ground seeds and raw nuts).
- Control chronic inflammation, the first stage of Alzheimer’s and other debilitating brain problems. This is done by balancing fats and avoiding all vegetable oils such as corn, soy, safflower, peanut, etc.
- Avoid high glycemic foods – eliminate processed carbohydrates. You know...AVOID sugar, white flour, white rice, pasta, crackers, bread, cereals, etc. They also contribute significantly to chronic inflammation.
- Drink enough plain water. Keep it simple; for most people, just filter your own tap water. Reverse osmosis is one of the best home systems, and removes about 98% of the impurities. If you have poor quality water, distillation eliminates 99+% of impurities and microorganisms.
- Eat at least 10 servings of fresh organic vegetables and fruits a day. This is the foundation of a great diet, providing thousands of nutrients we can’t get anywhere else.
- Get adequate high-quality protein each day. The best organic sources include grass-fed animal meats, eggs and wild fish. Vegetable proteins are found in beans, lentils, and nuts. Avoid all processed soy proteins and other hydrolyzed powdered products.

**Move your body.** While exercise has many wonderful benefits, none are more important than improving brain function. Gentle aerobic exercise has very powerful and immediate effects on the brain – even with one short easy walk. Mild exercise increases blood flow to the brain, increases oxygenation and nutrient delivery to the brain, reduces inflammation, and helps burn fat. So walk, dance, bike, swim or do something to move your body—everyday.

**Get more sun.** Sunlight stimulates healthy brain chemicals. While the cancer scare and other social factors keep people indoors, many are now paying a heavy price for avoiding adequate sun exposure. There is an epidemic of osteoporosis and many other chronic diseases that are related to vitamin D deficiency. One of the most widespread yet ignored effect of not getting enough sun is reduced brain function resulting in depression. A safe amount of sun exposure is about 15 minutes daily for the fair skinned and 30 minutes or more for those with darker skin. A healthy tan also protects against overexposure.

**Live your passion.** Get in touch with what you really enjoy doing in life...and do it! Don't wait. And, as much as possible, avoid doing things you don't do well. (Unless of course, it's something you really love, then learn how to do it well). Many studies have shown how the brain lights up when doing something enjoyable.

**Get adequate sleep.** Most adults need at least seven hours of uninterrupted sleep each night; Children need 10 to 12 or more. Create the best sleeping environment; eliminate noises, electronics and lights in the bedroom. Have a healthy, comfortable bed and natural bedding. Keep the room a bit cooler and assure enough humidity in the air. Get ready for the night; take a warm bath before bed, listen to music, or read quietly. Avoid drinking alcohol at least two hours before bed. Avoid caffeinated drinks many hours before bed. And of course, avoid processed carbohydrates. One way to find out how much sleep you need is to avoid using an alarm clock. Go to bed when you feel tired and get out of bed when you wake up.

**Change routines.** While having a routine does make you more efficient, making changes will challenge the brain to grow and develop new pathways. Examples of changes include using a different hand for your computer mouse, taking a slightly different walking or driving route, and changing the décor of your home or office with the seasons.

**The 5-Minute Power Break.** Phil developed “Respiratory Biofeedback” after seeing how this method of relaxation-breathing significantly increases healthy alpha brain waves and reduces stress hormones. This technique is found on [www.philmaffetone.com](http://www.philmaffetone.com).

Now you have 14 ways to improve brain function – plenty to keep you going for years!