



"CORE"tastic Kids Newsletter



Nutrition and Concentration

Eating a balanced diet is important for us all. When we eat well, we feel better. We are healthier and happier. Good nutrition is especially important for children who are growing and developing.

Good nutrition can play a complementary role in the treatment of a child's attention and focus. When a child's diet is balanced and healthy, his (or her) attention and focus symptoms may be better controlled.

A child who is hungry is apt to have more difficulty maintaining his concentration, frustrate more easily, and can become more irritable. Eating at regular intervals throughout the day helps keep tummies from growling and feeling empty.

Skipping meals and snacks may also produce low blood sugar levels. As a result, children are more likely to be cranky and moody. Foods that are especially high in processed sugars may spike blood sugar levels. Spikes in blood sugar may result in energy bursts and more active behaviors. Soon after the spike, blood sugar levels often fall resulting in sleepy, cranky, moodiness. This is sometimes referred to as the "spike and crash syndrome."

CHOOSE: Essential fatty acids (EFAs)

Here is one fat you want your child to have, which is the key to unlocking a child's brain.

The right kinds of fat are needed to help the brain fire information efficiently from synapse to synapse.

Good food sources: Fish, flax seeds and nuts are great sources of EFAs.

CHOOSE: Vitamin B complex

The B vitamins have been linked to improved neural activity and are great at reducing stress.

Good food sources: Nutritional yeast, liver, whole-grain cereals and breads, rice, nuts, milk, eggs, meats, fish, fruits, leafy green vegetables and soy.

CHOOSE: Protein

Protein evenly sustains your energy.

Good food sources: String cheese wrapped in whole grain bread, eggs, or low-fat plain yogurt blended with a banana for sweetness, offer nuts and seeds, brown rice cakes spread with hummus, or any nut butters such as cashew butter.

CHOOSE: Calcium and magnesium

While calcium is known for helping build strong bones, it also supports cell membranes and aids the nervous system, especially in impulse transmission, which could improve a child's behavior.

Magnesium also has a calming effect on the nervous system, helping to maintain normal muscle and nerve function, and is involved in energy metabolism.

Good food sources: Milk and milk products, green vegetables such as broccoli, kale, collard greens, whole grains and cereals are additional sources. Green veggies such as spinach are a great source of magnesium, as are beans and peas, nuts, seeds and whole grains.



Where performance meets potential.

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Calendar of Events:

Summer Camps
Begin June 7, 2010

Exercise of the Month

Popcorn

With the child lying flat on his back, ask him to bring his knees to his chest, wrapping his arms around his legs. He should then lift his head, flexing his neck and try to keep his nose close to his knees. A school aged child should be able to hold position for 20 seconds. The child should not roll to either side, but maintain this position without difficulty. For the first few times a child does this, have them hold it for 10 seconds and increase the duration each time.

Source: Athena Oden, P.T.



Body Works — From the Inside Out

There is a H E R O in us all

By Brent Petersen

A few weeks ago I had the privilege to spend some time with an amazing group of wounded Veterans. The "Wounded Warriors" were preparing to compete in the Inaugural Warrior Games, an Olympic style competition held in Colorado Springs, Colorado at the Olympic Training Center. I was fortunate enough to be selected as the Seated Volleyball coach for the Marine team and tasked with teaching them how to play the game and to bring them together as a team. Little did I know that the amount of teaching I would do would pale in comparison to what I would learn.

The wounded warriors that I worked with were all soldiers who have been injured during duty. Their injuries ranged from gunshot wounds, lost limbs, TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury), PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder), loss of vision, loss of hearing, paralysis, and the list goes on. I was so honored to be in their presence and constantly in such awe of them. I have always been conscious of the dedication, risk, and sacrifice of the men and women in the armed forces, but seeing them day in and day out, I have a new perspective. I will never see the word HERO again in the same light. Not only for what they have done for our country, for us, for me, for my son to live in freedom and grow up with hope; or because they have lost what we may take for granted on a daily basis, or for the lives lost, or even for their continued service to the country; these hero's have redefined HERO for me because they have not given up, not on themselves, not on others, not on life.

In the 2 weeks I spent in CO, I did not hear a single warrior complain, make excuses, or even give less than 100%. They press on with pride, with dignity, and with a desire and purpose that I could only dream of obtaining; or maybe it doesn't have to be a dream. We all have the ability to give our all, to fight for what is right, to live each day to the fullest and to take nothing for granted. There is no better time than today to take those first steps to making yourself stronger, smarter, and better in all areas of your life.

I think of Chuck, one of the Wounded Warriors and Marine team captain, and if he, with both legs lost, vision gone, suffering from terminal brain cancer, can find joy and happiness in life while swimming in the 50m freestyle event, then we all have the potential to find the blessings in our life and embrace them every day.

MENTAL MATH GAMES

Addition Pig

Players take turns rolling two dice. A player may roll the dice as many times as he/she wants, mentally keeping a total of the sums that come up. When the player stops rolling, he/she records the total, and adds it to the scores from previous rounds. BUT if a one is rolled, the player scores a 0 for that round, and it's the next player's turn.

Subtraction Pig

Two or more players start out with 100 points each. Players in turn roll two dice and subtract that number from their points. A player on a turn continues rolling the dice and mentally subtracting the resulting number from his remaining points until a 1 appears on any dice rolled. That player's turn ends, and the next player takes a turn. When a player has lost all of his points, he is out of the game. The last player in the game is the winner.



A perfect
summer day is
when the sun is
shining, the
breeze is
blowing, the
birds are
singing, and
the lawn mower
is broken.
~James Dent

Top 10 Ways To Improve Your Brain Fitness

Brain fitness has basic principles: variety and curiosity. When anything you do becomes second nature, you need to make a change. If you can do the crossword puzzle in your sleep, it's time for you to move on to a new challenge in order to get the best workout for your brain. Curiosity about the world around you, how it works and how you can understand it will keep your brain working fast and efficiently. Use the ideas below to help attain your quest for mental fitness.

1. Play Games

Brain fitness programs and games are a wonderful way to tease and challenge your brain. Sudoku, crosswords and electronic games can all improve your brain's speed and memory. These games rely on logic, word skills, math and more. These games are also fun. You'll get benefit more by doing these games a little bit every day -- spend 15 minutes or so, not hours.

Brain Training Exercises Test and Improve your Brain With Scientific Exercises. Free Trial.www.lumosity.com

Brain Games Brain Games to Increase Your Attention and Improve Your Memorywww.happy-neuron.com

Naturally Improve Memory Young or Old. Studies. Success. All Natural. Guaranteed to Work.www.hopewelltechnologieslimited.com

2. Meditation

Daily meditation is perhaps the single greatest thing you can do for your mind/body health. Meditation not only relaxes you, it gives your brain a workout. By creating a different mental state, you engage your brain in new and interesting ways while increasing your brain fitness.

3. Eat for Your Brain

Your brain needs you to eat healthy fats. Focus on fish oils from wild salmon, nuts such as walnuts, seeds such as flax seed and olive oil. Eat more of these foods and less saturated fats. Eliminate transfats completely from your diet.

4. Tell Good Stories

Stories are a way that we solidify memories, interpret events and share moments. Practice telling your stories, both new and old, so that they are interesting, compelling and fun. Some basic storytelling techniques will go a long way in keeping people's interest both in you and in what you have to say.

5. Turn Off Your Television

The average person watches more than 4 hours of television everyday. Television can stand in the way of relationships, life and more. Turn off your TV and spend more time living and exercising your mind and body.

6. Exercise Your Body To Exercise Your Brain

Physical exercise is great brain exercise too. By moving your body, your brain has to learn new muscle skills, estimate distance and practice balance. Choose a variety of exercises to challenge your brain.

7. Read Something Different

Books are portable, free from libraries and filled with infinite interesting characters, information and facts. Branch out from familiar reading topics. If you usually read history books, try a contemporary novel. Read foreign authors, the classics and random books. Not only will your brain get a workout by imagining different time periods, cultures and peoples, you will also have interesting stories to tell about your reading, what it makes you think of and the connections you draw between modern life and the words.

8. Learn a New Skill

Learning a new skill works multiple areas of the brain. Your memory comes into play, you learn new movements and you associate things differently. Reading Shakespeare, learning to cook and building an airplane out of toothpicks all will challenge your brain and give you something to think about.

9. Make Simple Changes

We love our routines. We have hobbies and pastimes that we could do for hours on end. But the more something is 'second nature,' the less our brains have to work to do it. To really help your brain stay young, challenge it. Change routes to the grocery store, use your opposite hand to open doors and eat dessert first. All this will force your brain to wake up from habits and pay attention again.

10. Train Your Brain

Brain training is becoming a trend. There are formal courses, websites and books with programs on how to train your brain to work better and faster. There is some research behind these programs, but the basic principles are memory, visualization and reasoning. Work on these three concepts everyday and your brain will be ready for anything.

By Mark Stibich, Ph.D., About.com Guide

Updated April 26, 2009

About.com Health's Disease and Condition content is reviewed by our Medical Review Board

http://longevity.about.com/od/mentalfitness/tp/Mental_fitness.htm

Family Reading Tips

- Read poems to/with your child.
- Read children's magazines.
- Echo Read: Choose something fun to read, such as a poem, song, or joke. You read a sentence with expression and ask your child to repeat the phrase after you.
- Check out the public library.
- Create a special place for your child's books in your home.
- Keep a few "old favorite" books in the car to enjoy.



Fun Handwriting Activities:

Summer is finally here and we have some great handwriting ideas for you and your child to enjoy. Many families go to the beach over the summer. Take some time to write or draw in the sand with your child. This is fun and helps develop fine motor skills. Digging in the sand also helps to build hand strength, so dig up some sand and build a sand castle. Crab crawl around the beach with your child. You may feel a little silly, but this is a great activity for building upper body strength and developing bilateral coordination. All of these activities are fun and help your child develop the necessary skills for handwriting with ease.

ENJOY YOUR SUMMER!!!!