



Good nutrition keeps the brain ticking

By Simone Baroke

Getting older inevitably means losing your marbles, right? Surprisingly, a direct correlation has been observed between mental functioning and nutritional status in older people.

As discussed in last month's article, our nutritional requirements increase as we get older. Instead of having three big meals a day, we should eat more frequently, and we also need foods of much higher quality.

Ignoring these changing demands can play a big part in premature memory loss and the development of dementia. The brain, being a highly sophisticated piece of equipment, is very sensitive to shortages in nutrient supplies.

Apart from water, the brain is made up almost entirely of fat. Now, before you rush out for pork pie and chips, let me tell you that this is not where you find those precious, brain-building fats. To feed your brain, you should eat plenty of fish, especially oily types (sardines are great for the brain!) nuts, seeds and unrefined plant oils, such as hemp and linseed oil.

Raw materials

The primary fuel used by our brains is glucose, a simple sugar derived from the digestion of sugary and starchy foods, such as bread, pasta and potatoes. The brain needs a constant and steady supply.

Too little glucose, and we start to feel dizzy, irritable, and faint. We lose our concentration and our temper, as well as memory power. Too much glucose, on the other hand, is damaging to the brain. This is why we should avoid sugary foods and refined flour products such as white bread.

The best way to keep our brains supplied with an optimum amount of fuel is by eating meals and snacks containing a combination of protein, whole grains and (good!) fats. Beans and pulses yield excellent brain fuel.

Fruits and vegetables contain powerful protective substances called antioxidants, which guard our

brains against damage. Low antioxidant intakes have been linked to dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. Mushy peas won't do - go for fresh, green and brightly coloured fruit and veg.

If you want to keep your grey matter in top shape, don't just rely on completing your weekly crossword, but also make a conscious effort to supply the right raw materials.

Simone is a Nutritional Therapist and practises in East Finchley and Finchley Central. She can be contacted on 020 8883 0915 or 07950 054754.

A life on the reservoir wave

Do you have a future champion sailor in the family? You might be surprised to learn that living in landlocked East Finchley isn't necessarily a disadvantage.

Just half an hour's drive away in the upper Lea Valley is Fishers Green Sailing Club where budding young Ben Ainsleys and Ellen MacArthurs train each Saturday. They sail Cadets, small two-person dinghies designed for seven to 17-year-olds.

Among the Fishers Green sailors are Louise Latham, aged 12, from Chandos Road, and Rebecca Longman, aged 14, who lives in Barnet.

Both Louise and Rebecca won places in the Royal Yachting Association's East Zone Cadet Squad, which has been training through the winter at Alton in Suffolk.

They also both took part in the National Inland Championships in Rutland and expect to sail at the National Championships at Weymouth in August.



Louise Latham and her crew Oliver Palierakis at the Cadet Inland National Championships at Rutland Water. Photo by Ian Latham

We are sailing

Most new Cadet sailors learn the basics by crewing and many go on to helm their own boats once they have gained more experience and confidence.

Teaching is taken very seriously by the top-class trainers, although the young sailors seem to have as much fun off the water as on!

Would-be Cadet sailors are welcome to come along and find out more at Fishers Green on 11 June or 9 July, or join the novice sailing training programme in September.

For further details email squad captain Andy Moss (andrew@cumberlandplace.co.uk) or phone Louise's mother Christine Watson on 020 8883 4207.

KALASHNIKOV KULTUR

By Ricky Savage, the voice of social irresponsibility

Star Bores

Once upon a time, in a cinema not far from here, I spent a chemically-altered evening watching Star Wars. It was great in a kind of weirdly children's TV meets a bad western sort of way, but it was the 1970s and I was too out-to-lunch to care.

Even then, Star Wars was more and less than a movie; it was almost a way of life. Director George Lucas always meant to go on and on and on until he'd strung together nine tales of far-off galaxies inhabited by Americans and strange creatures created by the computer graphics department.

The thing was, the first three movies were all right. They were brilliant if you were under 10 or drunk and watchable if it was Sunday afternoon and granny was round for tea. After all, they were just westerns in space.

The first film was really a western about how the small time farmers, aided by a hired gunslinger and a young kid, beat the corrupt local rancher and his hired guns, including the most feared man in the West, a hired gunslinger who always wears black. It was fantasyland but it was fun.

The next two, episodes five and six in the saga, weren't so much movies as marketing opportunities and made George Lucas an insanely wealthy man. So much so that he tried the same trick again with the prequels.

...and more bores

Now we could find out how Darth Vader became Darth Vader and the total myth of the villain could be destroyed. Hell, I don't want my villains to be misunderstood; I want them to be evil because they enjoy it.

The total marketing overkill for the latest film in the series *Revenge of the Sith* is like being hit over the head with a Ford Prefect after drinking ten pan-galactic gargleblasters without anaesthetic. It's not a film, it's Lego and light sabres and chocolate bars and breakfast cereals and overkill and hype and please, Mr Lucas, spare us episodes seven, eight and nine. Honestly, I don't want to know whether Harrison Ford marries Carrie Fisher or who goes over to the dark side of the farce. Enough is enough, and besides, I was always a stoned Hitcher myself.

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