



Vitamin B12

Why It Matters

B12 is essential for keeping nerve cells healthy and maintaining sharp cognitive functions.

It's crucial for mental clarity and mood stability, particularly important as women navigate hormonal changes and aim to maintain mental agility.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Clams:** Exceptionally high in Vitamin B12
- ✓ **Salmon:** A great source of B12 and omega-3 fatty acids.
- ✓ **Fortified Cereals:** A good plant-based source of B12
- ✓ **Beef:** Especially beef liver, which is packed with B12.
- ✓ **Eggs:** Easy to include in various meals for a B12 boost.



Vitamin B6

Why It Matters

B6 plays a vital role in producing neurotransmitters that regulate emotions, making it key to managing mood swings and maintaining emotional balance, especially during times like PMS or menopause.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Chickpeas:** High in B6.
- ✓ **Tuna:** Especially fresh or canned in water.
- ✓ **Bananas:** A convenient, portable source of B6.
- ✓ **Sweet Potatoes:** A nutritious source of B6 and dietary fibre.
- ✓ **Turkey Breast:** A lean source of protein and B6.



Vitamin B9 (Folate)

Why It Matters

Folate supports overall brain health and is critical for emotional well-being. Its ability to aid in battling depression is particularly beneficial during hormonal shifts that can impact mood. It's also necessary for a baby's brain development during pregnancy.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Lentils:** Packed with folate and protein.
- ✓ **Asparagus:** High in folate and several other nutrients.
- ✓ **Avocado:** Offers folate along with healthy fats.
- ✓ **Broccoli:** Can be enjoyed raw or cooked, rich in folate.
- ✓ **Spinach:** A versatile leafy green, high in folate.



Iron (Meat and Plant)

Why It Matters

Iron is fundamental for cognitive performance and energy levels. Ensuring sufficient iron intake is vital for women to combat fatigue and maintain cognitive function, especially if menstrual cycle pregnancy or perimenopausal changes affect iron levels.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Spinach (Plant):** A good plant-based source of iron.
- ✓ **Lentils (Plant):** Rich in iron and beneficial for vegetarians and vegans.
- ✓ **Beef (Meat):** Red meat is especially high in heme iron.
- ✓ **Tofu (Plant):** A versatile plant-based iron source.
- ✓ **Chicken Liver (Meat):** A potent source of heme iron.



Selenium

Why It Matters

Selenium's antioxidant properties help protect the brain and support mood stabilisation. Its role becomes increasingly significant in managing the mental health challenges that can accompany hormonal fluctuations.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Brazil Nuts:** Just a few nuts can meet your daily requirements.
- ✓ **Tuna:** Offers selenium along with B vitamins.
- ✓ **Sunflower Seeds:** A snack that's high in selenium.
- ✓ **Eggs:** Provide selenium and a range of other nutrients.
- ✓ **Shiitake Mushrooms:** A plant-based source of selenium.



Zinc

Why It Matters

Zinc contributes to neurotransmitter function and overall brain health. Adequate zinc intake is essential for cognitive function and emotional regulation, aiding smooth transitions through different life stages.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Oysters:** Among the best sources of zinc.
- ✓ **Pumpkin Seeds:** A great plant-based source.
- ✓ **Lentils:** Provide zinc along with protein and fibre.
- ✓ **Beef:** A rich source of bioavailable zinc.
- ✓ **Cashews:** A snack high in zinc and healthy fats.



Calcium

Why It Matters

Beyond its role in bone health, calcium is crucial for neurotransmission and mood regulation. As estrogen levels decline, particularly during menopause, maintaining calcium intake is key for both mental and physical health.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Collard Greens:** A leafy green high in calcium.
- ✓ **Dairy Products:** Milk, cheese, and yoghurt are traditional calcium sources.
- ✓ **Almonds:** A nutty source of calcium.
- ✓ **Tofu:** Often fortified with calcium.
- ✓ **Sardines:** Edible bones offer a calcium boost.



Omega-3

Why It Matters

Omega-3 fatty acids are vital for reducing brain inflammation and supporting cell health, playing a significant role in cognitive maintenance and mood support. Their benefits are especially noteworthy for enhancing brain function during menopause.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Salmon:** Rich in EPA and DHA forms of omega-3.
- ✓ **Flaxseeds:** A top plant-based source of ALA omega-3.
- ✓ **Chia Seeds:** Another excellent plant source of omega-3.
- ✓ **Walnuts:** Provide omega-3 fatty acids and other nutrients.
- ✓ **Mackerel:** A fatty fish high in omega-3.



Vitamin D3

Why It Matters

Vitamin D3 supports brain health and mood regulation. With its potential to protect against cognitive decline, ensuring adequate Vitamin D3 intake is crucial, especially in reducing the risk of mood disorders and supporting brain health as estrogen decreases.

Note: Vitamin D3 is primarily obtained through sun exposure and fortified foods or supplements, but here are foods that help:

Food Sources

- ✓ **Fortified Orange Juice:** For a non-dairy source of Vitamin D.
- ✓ **Egg Yolks:** Small amounts of D3.
- ✓ **Fortified Milk:** Dairy and plant-based versions.
- ✓ **Salmon:** Offers vitamin D3.
- ✓ **Cod Liver Oil:** A potent source of D3, though it's more of a supplement.



Magnesium

Why It Matters

Magnesium aids in stress reduction and improves sleep quality, both of which are crucial for cognitive health. It becomes particularly important for women facing stress, PMS, or menopause, helping to maintain a calm mind and restorative sleep.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Spinach:** A leafy source of magnesium.
- ✓ **Almonds:** Nuts high in magnesium.
- ✓ **Black Beans:** A legume rich in magnesium.
- ✓ **Avocado:** Offers magnesium and healthy fats.
- ✓ **Pumpkin Seeds:** A magnesium-packed snack.



Iodine

Why It Matters

Iodine is key for thyroid function, which in turn affects cognitive processes and mood balance. Proper iodine levels support brain function and are especially important during reproductive changes, which can influence mental clarity.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Seaweed:** A potent source of iodine.
- ✓ **Cod:** Provides iodine.
- ✓ **Dairy Products:** Milk and yoghurt contain iodine.
- ✓ **Iodised Salt:** An easy way to ensure iodine intake.
- ✓ **Eggs:** Contain naturally occurring iodine.



Creatine

Why It Matters

While known for enhancing physical performance, creatine also offers cognitive benefits by supporting brain energy metabolism. This is beneficial for sustaining mental energy and focus, particularly as we age or during periods of increased physical activity.

Food Sources

- ✓ **Beef:** Contains creatine.
- ✓ **Pork:** Another source of creatine.
- ✓ **Salmon:** Provides creatine along with omega-3 fatty acids.
- ✓ **Tuna:** Contains creatine.
- ✓ **Chicken:** Offers creatine.