



The MIND HEALTH REPORT

Secrets to Unlocking Your Mind for Work, Love and Life

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Train Your Brain to Lose Body Fat

We are obsessed with dieting. With 77 million people spending nearly \$60 billion on weight loss programs, the dieting industry has become a big part of the American economy. And yet, according to some reports, as many as 95 percent of those diet programs fail.

Most people either give up after a little while or lose weight initially, only to gain back at least as many pounds as they lost. For most dieters, it's a constant struggle.

And it's not just about looking good. Excess weight increases risks for heart disease, diabetes, prostate and post-menopausal breast cancer, osteoarthritis, sleep apnea, and gall bladder disease. In addition, obesity nearly quadruples the odds of developing Alzheimer's disease.

Seeking a solution to the diet dilemma, The Mind Health Report looked into a new approach called TurboCharging. It isn't a diet in the usual sense, but a way of eating and exercising that harnesses the power of the brain to break the vicious cycle of dieting.

Dian Griesel, Ph.D., co-author of TurboCharged: Accelerate Your Fat Burning Metabolism, Get Lean Fast and Leave Diet and Exercise Rules in the Dust, has studied eating and exercise habits throughout recorded history, right up to the most recent published research. And over a period of about 25 years, she turned the knowledge of millennia into a practical system for maintaining a healthy weight.

TurboCharging's Principles

"Your brain's job is to keep itself, your heart, and other essential organs working," says Griesel, a

Dr. Paul Nussbaum: Socialization Aids Brain Health



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licensed hypnotherapist who has a doctorate degree in nutrition. "If you aren't eating and exercising correctly, your brain will start screaming for food, making you think you're hungry even when you're not." That mechanism inevitably leads to overeating.

Griesel and other nutrition experts point out that, physiologically, our bodies have never adapted to the way we live today. An overabundance of processed foods and little opportunity for physical activity were not the norm for the great majority of human history.

Eating patterns of early man were sporadic, and did not follow a schedule of "three square" meals because food wasn't always available. In addition, physical activity was built in to a hunter-gatherer's

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lifestyle. They had to walk many miles to find fruits and vegetables, as well as climbing up trees or over rocks to escape from dangerous creatures. Hunting wild animals also demanded intense activity that ended either with nothing to show for their efforts, or with extraordinarily large meals of fresh meat.

The approach Griesel recommends mirrors these ancient patterns, but is adapted to today's world and supported by current research. When following the plan, people begin to notice improvements within three days. After 10 days, benefits are usually dramatic enough to motivate permanent lifestyle changes.

The TurboCharging process trains the brain to use excess body fat as fuel, and to preserve muscle and other essential lean tissues that we need to be strong, energetic, and youthful.

Forget the 'Conventional Wisdom'

Ignore whatever you've read or heard about weight loss. To start with, most diets cut calories to unrealistic levels.

Griesel estimates that the average overweight person is consuming around 3,500 calories per day. Yet diets usually call for no more than about 1,800 calories for men and 1,600 for women.

These dramatic reductions actually signal a scarcity of food that poses a threat to the brain. In reaction, it causes the body to store fuel in fat cells to protect itself.

Likewise, conventional exercise advice (most often a directive to do 30 to 90 minutes of aerobic exercise daily or lift heavy weights) can be counterproductive. That much exertion, says Griesel, tells the brain it must hoard food — meaning, again, store it as fat — because the extreme demands being placed on the body result in a loss of muscle.

Other myths include: the scale measures progress; fruit should be limited or avoided;

whole grains are healthy foods; you must eat a big breakfast; dietary fat must be limited; and meal and snack times should be regimented.

Another myth — that you should lose no more than 1 to 2 pounds per week — makes it difficult to stay motivated. And, says Griesel, it simply isn't based on science.

When you eat and exercise the right way, your brain will direct your body to shed fat at its own, likely faster, rate.

Measure What Matters: Body Fat

“Learn to measure the only thing you want to lose: body fat,” says Griesel.

Fat loss tells you that the brain is being fed properly, rather than being stressed by lack of nutrients and the wrong types of physical activity. Measuring your weight by only pounds can give you a false picture of your overall health, because you could be losing muscle, which sets you up for weight regain; or water, which will easily reappear.

Body fat is measured as a percentage of your total weight. You can get a bathroom scale that estimates your percentage of body fat, and use it to track your progress. Some medical clinics and many fitness centers also provide accurate body fat measures.

Water: The Fat-Burning Elixir

Dehydration is rampant in this country. What may surprise you is that it is frequently misinterpreted as hunger, leading to overeating.

We don't feel thirsty until our bodies are 4 to 5 percent dehydrated, says Griesel. However, false hunger signals from the brain are usually triggered earlier, when we are only 2 percent dehydrated.

To correct the problem, she advises that when people feel hungry, they should drink 8 to 32 ounces of water before reaching for food. Using this approach, you will gradually eliminate false hunger

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Body Fat: How Much Is Healthy?

Today, women commonly have 35 percent body fat, and men typically have 25 percent. These are unhealthy levels that indicate your brain is hoarding fat, which speeds aging and fosters disease.

The chart below shows normal ranges of body fat for women and men with different levels of fitness. If you want to be in the best shape possible, aim for the “Fitness” or “Athletes” range.

To achieve and maintain these lower percentages of fat, it’s essential to do exercise that strengthens and maintains muscle or, if you are frail, to build healthy muscle tissue. (See One-Minute Workouts, page 5.)

PERCENTAGE OF BODY FAT

	Women	Men
Essential Body Fat	10-13%	2-5%
Athletes	14-20%	6-13%
Fitness	21-24%	14-17%
Acceptable.....	25-31%	18-24%
Obese	Above 32%	Above 25%

Source: Percent Body Fat Norms for Men and Women, ACE (*American Council on Exercise*) *Lifestyle & Weight Management Coach Manual*

signals from your brain.

You also have to watch what you eat with regard to keeping hydrated. Fresh fruits and vegetables are obviously high in water, but most people don’t eat enough of those. Processed foods can cause dehydration because they have unnaturally low water content. In addition, grains (which we eat a lot of these days) have very low moisture content. There’s more water in steak than in brown rice.

Use Mouthwash or Toothpaste

The brain needs an adequate amount of glucose. Otherwise, its survival is threatened and it takes nutrients from muscles and other lean tissue.

Mouthwashes and toothpastes contain sorbitol, a form of sugar. When you think you’re hungry, using one of these will send a message to the brain that sugar is plentiful; that will cause the brain to use body fat as fuel.

Once you’re well along on the TurboCharged plan, you don’t have to do this every time you want food, but it can help to kick-start change.

Stay Away From Health Clubs

Intense sessions of exercise a few times per week can trigger the brain to break down muscle and use it as fuel instead of burning body fat. Rather

than being sedentary most of the day and occasionally doing a workout at a health club, Griesel recommends building regular activity into your daily life.

There are many simple ways to be more active. Make household cleaning into an “exercise” activity. Vacuum under the couch; move furniture to get dust out of hidden spaces; clean out your own gutters; rake the garden; do your own landscaping; clean out closets; get rid of clutter in the garage and attic; and consider doing your own home repairs.

In addition, take every opportunity to walk. For example, return the supermarket cart to its rightful place after unloading groceries. Your body is built to go through many spurts of activity in the course of a day, so this strategy is more therapeutic than occasional, scheduled workouts — and you’re more likely to stick with it.

Forget About ‘Balanced’ Meals

For decades, a meal that included protein, vegetables, and grains was considered the best

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Dian Griesel



Dian Griesel holds a doctorate in nutrition, is a hypnotherapist, a member of the International Association of Counselors and Therapists, and co-author (with her brother, Tom Griesel) of *TurboCharged: Accelerate Your Fat Burning Metabolism, Get Lean*

Fast and Leave Diet and Exercise Rules in the Dust. She has served on the Board of the New York Chapter of the American Heart Association, and taught classes in health, weight, and stress management for the City University of New York. For the past 25 years, Griesel has studied diets and exercise patterns of human beings throughout history.



By Dr. Paul Nussbaum

Socialization Promotes Brain Health Throughout Life

Human beings are hard-wired to live in groups. During the majority of our lifetimes, we interact with family, a network of friends, a set of peers and colleagues at work, and associates in the community. This custom of socialization not only helps us live happy, fulfilled lives, it actually benefits brain health.

Research on the effects of socialization and health indicate those who isolate themselves tend to have higher rates of Alzheimer's disease and depression, and lower rates of longevity. This effect is seen both with general friendship relations and with marriage. Clearly, there is an innate psychobiological need for each of us to be with others.

Years ago, I delivered a presentation on lifelong learning and its impact on brain health to an international conference held at the United Nations. We were fortunate to hear from Kofi Anan, Secretary General of the U.N. at the time, who stated, "Every time we lose a family member, we lose a library."

This statement underlines how socialization allows us to derive meaning from the experience of others, and to expand our knowledge base by remaining connected to our communities.

Purpose Prolongs Life

There is no doubt that we need to continue to build our network of family and friends across our life spans and to remain integrated in our communities.

Many of us have had a family member — often an older family member — who begins to decline invitations to social gatherings or is no longer participating in activities that were once enjoyable.

This is a red flag for risk of health decline ranging from mood disorder to cognitive impairment. People who do not have a reason to get up each morning will not live life to the fullest and will increase their risk for dying prematurely. The cause of death may be "heart attack," but the person really lost their purpose in life.

I saw this in my own family when an older relative had to place his wife in a nursing home because he could no longer care for her. He died shortly after her admission, even though he was quite healthy physically. He lost his role and purpose. And eventually, he lost the will to live.

Don't Retire From Life

Following this reasoning, one can begin to question retirement as it is currently practiced in the United States. The U.S. adopted a retirement age of 65 in the 1930s. But back then, the average lifespan was 62!

Today, women will live into their 80s and men into their late 70s. The fundamental problem with our retirement policy is that it ignores the importance of socialization and urges people to remove themselves from society. As a policy, that is not brain-healthy.

Especially as we get older, each of us should find activities that enable us to follow our interests along with others who share them. Do not let yourself become passive and isolated, as that can only diminish brain health. Retirement from a job is one thing, but retirement from life should be avoided at all costs.

To maintain a healthy degree of socialization, try some of these activities:

- Think of two or three hobbies that you can begin to nurture. Hobbies are a good way to meet new people and to develop relationships
- Explore joining a new group or organization that has a mission dedicated to helping others
- Learn to use social network sites to join virtual communities
- Get involved with your place of worship, a men's group or women's group
- Consider intergenerational activities such as mentoring a young person in need of help

Today is a great day to reflect on your level of socialization, your network of friends and family, and your role and purpose in life. Make small changes to improve any area of weakness and enjoy the health benefits that socialization can bring. □

Dr. Paul Nussbaum is a licensed clinical neuropsychologist, adjunct professor of Neurological Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, and an leader in the area of "brain health lifestyle." His books include *Save Your Brain* and *Your Brain Health Lifestyle: Application to the School, Library, Corporate Setting, and Home*. Dr. Nussbaum presented his views on brain health at the United Nations and National Press Club. He also consults with many companies and organizations to help implement a brain health culture. His website is www.paulnussbaum.com.

Strengthen Muscles With One-Minute Workouts

When you frequently work your muscles, just as early humans did, the brain gets a message that it should preserve that muscle. This trains the brain to use body fat for fuel.

Surprisingly, all it takes is one minute of exercise — as long as it's done the right way. One exercise should be done every two to three hours, or when you feel hungry.

These simple exercises can be done at work or at home, says Griesel. Choose one and do it for one minute, or for a count of 60. Most people can't do one for that long at first, so do what you can, then rest, breathe, and repeat for a total of one minute. Do a variety of exercises during the course of a day.

Here are a few different exercises to get you started:

- Lean against the wall and squat down as far as you can. Keep your feet flat on the floor and knees bent at a 90-degree angle. Hold that position

- Suck in your stomach and hold tight
- While sitting, lift your legs straight out in front of you and hold steady
- While sitting, extend your legs in front of you and criss-cross them like a pair of scissors
- Put your palms together in front of your chest and push them together as hard as you can
- Extend your arms in front of you or to your sides at shoulder height. Move them up and down—up three inches, down three inches — as if you were flapping wings like a bird
- When watching television, instead of getting a snack during commercials, get off the couch and do push-ups, squats, or lunges.

As you progress, build up to three-minute sets of an exercise, which will develop greater strength and muscle definition.

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kind of “balanced” meal a person could consume. However, Griesel warns against eating this way.

According to her, the carbohydrate component in balanced meals — which comes from grains such as rice, bread, and pasta — are “comfort foods” that naturally trigger the brain to want more, thereby inducing overeating. Cakes, cookies, and pastries have the same effect. In addition to provoking cravings, our typical balanced meals prevent body fat from being burned as fuel.

Griesel recommends not eating grains in any form, not even whole grains. This includes rice, all bread products, pastas, and all types of cereals.

Historically, she points out, civilizations that have eaten grains have experienced more age-related diseases. As a concentrated form of carbohydrates without natural water content, grains are difficult to digest and may result in high blood-sugar levels, leading to greater fat storage.

And although unrefined grains do contain vitamins and minerals, they also contain phytate, a substance that interferes with absorption of nutrients. Fruits and vegetables are far better sources for essential nutrients, explains Griesel.

Studies published in the past few years support the premise that grain foods do not promote good health. For example, an analysis of worldwide eating habits, published in *BMC Endocrine Disorders*,

found that grain consumption is linked to “diseases of affluence,” such as heart disease and diabetes.

Other research, published in the *European Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, found that a hunter-gatherer diet free of grains lowers blood pressure, improves the levels of cholesterol and other blood fats, promotes healthier levels of blood sugar, and reduces chronic internal inflammation. In essence, such research shows that abstaining from grain consumption prevents heart disease and diabetes, and slows down the aging process.

Griesel also recommends eating meals consisting only of protein and fat, such as lean red meats, poultry, fish, eggs (free range), cheeses, and tofu. Meals consisting of only fruits and vegetables should be eaten separately.

This approach defies conventional wisdom, but is based on the premise that our bodies are

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Mind Health Insights

Is Alzheimer's Contagious?

Older people who care for a spouse with Alzheimer's increase their own risk of developing dementia, according to a study at the University of Washington School of Medicine in Seattle. The disease cannot be physically transmitted, but research shows that caregiver spouses experience more problems with memory and attention than other people the same age.

The study, published in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*, found that caregivers often have a poor diet, don't exercise, lack sleep, are under stress, and feel isolated. These factors can lead to memory problems and dementia.

As a caregiver of a spouse, there are some ways to reduce your risk:

- Eat regular meals with plenty of fruits, vegetables, and lean meats, and drink plenty of water throughout the day. Try to prepare healthy dishes with leftovers for convenient but wholesome meals during the next day or two
- Each day, aim to take a walk for 10 minutes and do a few simple movements that work different muscles (see *One-Minute Workouts*, page 5)
- Sleep when your spouse sleeps and take naps, if needed, to get seven to eight hours of sleep each night. Even if sleep is interrupted, getting more in the course of a 24-hour period will help
- Allow time for yourself every day to do something you enjoy, if only for a few minutes
- Stay connected with friends whose company has an uplifting effect

Smiles Aren't Always Sexy

When is a smile sexy? Men and women have very different opinions on that question, according to a Canadian study of more than 1,000 people published in the journal *Emotion*.

Women were least attracted to smiling, happy men. They preferred those who looked proud and powerful or moody and ashamed.

But for men, the sexiest women looked happy, and those who appeared proud and confident had the least sexual appeal.

The researchers, from the University of British Columbia, noted that this study explored only first impressions of sexual attractiveness. Earlier studies have found that when it comes to picking a boyfriend or spouse, both genders favor positive emotional traits and a nice personality.

Special Supplement Keeps You Mentally Sharp

Choline, a nutrient found in meat, eggs, and nuts, is essential for brain function. But as we get older, it isn't well absorbed. A dietary supplement containing a specially formulated version of choline solves the problem because it can be absorbed by the older brain.

A study of 60 middle-aged women at the University of Utah Brain Institute compared the effects of a placebo with 250 mg and 500 mg doses of the supplement, known as Cognizin. Researchers found that both Cognizin doses, taken for 28 days, improved subjects' ability to concentrate and control attention.

The findings were presented at an annual meeting of the Society of Biological Psychiatry.

Other studies have found that Cognizin protects against loss of mental abilities linked to normal aging and neurological disorders. For example, a Spanish study published in the journal *Stroke* found that when taken for six months after a stroke, the supplement reduced debilitating mental decline and may lower risk for dementia.

Look for supplement labels that list this form of choline as Citicoline, CDP Choline, or Cognizin. One capsule contains 250 mg.

Cognizin should be taken with food. Try 250 mg with breakfast. If you don't notice a difference after a few weeks, take an additional 250 mg with dinner.

Pesticides Damage Child's Brain in the Womb

The more a baby in the womb is exposed to pesticides, the lower the child's IQ and the higher that child's risk of developing attention problems, according to three separate studies published in *Environmental Health Perspectives*.

The research tracked hundreds of pregnant women in two locations—a rural part of California and in New York City—measuring pesticide levels in their bodies. Then, researchers measured pesticide levels, IQ, and other mental skills of the women's offspring for at least five years.

All of these studies drew the same conclusions: Pesticides cause the most damage when the brain is developing in the womb, leading to lower IQ by age 7 and greater attention problems by age 5.

Eating organic food and staying away from pesticide during pregnancy helps prevent this damage. □

The Daily Weight Loss Plan

Griesel's approach doesn't limit food quantities or dictate when a person should eat. The timing of meals or snacks is driven by your hunger — once you've made sure that it's real hunger. Always drink 8 to 32 ounces of plain water first thing in the morning. Then, when you feel as though you want food:

1. Drink 8 to 32 ounces of water. It can be flavored with slices of fresh ginger or cucumber, a spritz of fresh lemon or a cinnamon stick. Or, steep an herbal tea bag (without any sweetener or other added calories) in hot water and drink it hot or cold.
2. Do a One-Minute Workout from the list on page 5.
3. Brush your teeth or rinse with a mouthwash (optional).
4. Then, if you're still hungry, eat. There are no limits on how much or how often you eat. Neither breakfast nor any other meal is mandatory — your personal appetite determines when and how much you eat.

However, you should always choose one of these types of meals:

- Protein and fat, including beef, fish, pork, venison, chicken, eggs, cheeses of all kinds, or tofu. For example, you could eat a lean steak, or steak and eggs, but skip bread, potatoes and other vegetables.
- Fruits and vegetables, which can include potatoes (not fried) and avocado, without added fats or protein. Have a combination of steamed, grilled or raw vegetables with spices of your choice or a fat-free vinaigrette dressing without added sugar and/or an assortment of

fresh fruit. Variety is always beneficial.

- A smoothie made with water or ice and a scoop of 100 percent whey, egg, or pea protein powder that is pure protein "isolate," with no added sugar or corn syrup. Should contain no more than 3 grams of carbohydrate, 20 to 25 grams of protein and 100 calories per serving.

These are possible variations:

- A protein/fat meal may include 10 percent vegetables
- A fruit/vegetable meal may include 10 percent protein and/or fat
- 1 to 2 pieces of whole fruit can be added to a smoothie.

This routine is the plan for losing body fat. Once you have reached your goal, Griesel recommends continuing to drink 8 to 32 ounces of water first thing in the morning.

However, you may not need water before every meal (because you will be eating plenty of water-rich fruits and vegetables), or exercise whenever you want food (although you will still need a one-minute bout of exercise a few times a day).

As you lose body fat using the TurboCharged program, your body becomes more hydrated and you will learn to distinguish your real hunger from false signals. Then you can settle into maintaining your new and improved state.

If you like, you can eat other foods occasionally, as long as you stick with a hunter-gatherer diet most of the time. Many people find that grains and other unhealthy foods hold little appeal.

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designed to function as they did when meat was eaten by itself only after a hunt, and vegetables and fruits were eaten at different times, whenever they were available.

Historically, many nutritionists and physicians have prescribed this type of diet, and there is no evidence that it could be harmful. People who have followed the TurboCharged program have routinely reduced body fat and improved their health with relatively little effort.

'See' Your Way to a Healthy Lifestyle

Visualizing your goal is an essential part of reaching that goal. Do it in your mind or use pictures of people whose fitness you admire. In her own quest for health, Griesel pasted a picture of her

face on the body of her fitness role model, and put it on her fridge. This will help train your brain to achieve your goal.

She doesn't recommend embarking on a strenuous exercise program while you are trying to get lean but once you have achieved your goal, feel free to take on greater physical challenges. For example, if you've always wanted to run a marathon, start training, but only after your body has reached a stable, healthy state.

To maintain a lean body and a healthy brain, it's important to remember the basic TurboCharged principles and to learn what your body can tolerate. For example, if you eat a pasta dish once a week it may not make a difference, but doing so several times a week may lead to extra body fat.

It's your body and, in the long term, you have to be the judge. □

Ask the Doctors

The Mind Health Report editors seek out top doctors across the nation to provide answers to your mind health concerns. Please include your full name, city, and state when submitting. If you have a question, please e-mail it to: mindreport@newsmax.com.

I have seen reports that recommend eating organic food because pesticides are toxic to the brain. Is organic food always grown without pesticides?

— Jorge, Salinas, Calif.

Pamela Marrone responds: A lot of organic farms, especially small ones, don't use any pesticides. The law governing organic agriculture does allow farmers to use certain types of pesticides, but these are tightly regulated and quite different from those used on conventional farms. As a result, it's highly unlikely that organic food will have a toxic effect on the brain or the rest of the body.



Conventional pesticides routinely use ingredients that are neurotoxic, meaning they attack the brains and central nervous systems of the pests. Residues on produce can be neurotoxic to humans as well.

In contrast, most of the pesticides used on organic farms do not contain neurotoxins, and in the minority of cases where they do, the amounts are so small that they do not pose a threat to humans.

There is another, perhaps more important difference: Pesticides allowed in organic farming are biodegradable, meaning they break down rapidly, and it's highly unlikely that there will be any residue on produce by the time you buy it. However, pesticides that are permitted on conventional farms do not degrade as quickly and residues typically last long enough to reach your table.

Pamela Marrone, Ph.D., holds a doctorate in entomology (the scientific study of insects) and is a recognized leader in developing natural pest-management products. She is the founder and CEO of Marrone Bio Innovations and an adviser to the California Department of Pesticide Regulation.

I have a 12-year-old son and am curious about how violent video games negatively affect the brain. Intuitively, I think that they must. Do you have more information?

— Angie, Johnson City, Tenn.

Bruce Bartholow responds: The question of how video games affect the brain has only recently been addressed by scientists. My own research has shown that playing a violent video game for as little as 25 minutes causes changes within the brain.



Essentially, the game player's brain becomes less responsive to real-world violence, at least temporarily. Scientists call this kind of effect "desensitization," which means that a psychological or emotional response is smaller than it normally would be.

Desensitization can have a number of consequences, including increased aggressiveness.

Our research also suggests that chronic exposure to violent video games can have longer-lasting effects. While the effects of any single exposure to game playing might dissipate after as little as 15 to 20 minutes, with continued exposure the effects build up and can become longer lasting, possibly permanent.

These negative consequences should be considered in light of potentially positive effects of video game play, which might include an increased ability to simultaneously pay attention to multiple things in the environment.

However, the science is very new, and much more research is needed to fully understand the long-term effects of violent video game play on the brain and behavior.

Bruce Bartholow, Ph.D., is associate professor in the Department of Psychological Sciences at the University of Missouri in Columbia. His research focuses on predictors of aggression, stereotyping, and perception, and reasons for and consequences of alcohol use and abuse.

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