

Glow, Don't Grow: Holiday Tips to Nourish Brain & Body

The holiday season is full of festive foods, tempting treats, and cocktails— before you throw in the towel and give in to holiday weight gain, brain fog, and fatigue, here's the great news: you don't have to.

Use these **6 simple, actionable brain health tips** to help you stay sharp, energized, and in control, so you can enjoy it —without the stress or guilt. Let's dive in!

Hack #1: Detoxifying Hydration for a Brain Boost

Why It Works:

When you don't hydrate enough, toxins build up in the body, leaving you feeling sluggish and foggy. With each year, our liver may become less efficient at clearing these toxins, leading to bloating, low energy, and brain fog. Detoxifying hydration can help support your liver and clear out the bloat— while also improving mental clarity and mood.

The Action:

Kick-start your day with a metabolism-boosting routine:

- Drink half your body weight in ounces of water daily to flush out toxins.
- Add 1-2 tablespoons of apple cider vinegar (ACV) to warm water, or a squeeze of lemon, to reduce bloating, curb cravings, and jump-start your metabolism.

Quick Tips:

- Drink a glass of water + a pinch of sea salt to replenish electrolytes after waking up
 - Infuse your water with cucumber, lemon, or mint for extra digestive support.
 - Drink herbal teas like ginger or dandelion root to soothe your digestive system and support detox.
-

Hack #2: Stress Resilience for a Calm, Clear Mind

Why It Works:

The stress of the holiday season can lead to inflammation and diminish cognitive function over time. Chronic stress negatively impacts your brain, causing cognitive overload and emotional instability. Practice stress management techniques like mindfulness, deep breathing, and gratitude to keep your brain calm, focused, and resilient—helping you stay grounded through holiday chaos.

The Action:

Practice stress resilience daily with these simple techniques:

COLOR MY FOOD

Functional Nutrition

- **Mindful Breathing:** Inhale deeply for 4 counts, hold for 4, exhale for 4. Repeat for 3 - 5 minutes.
- **Nature Walks:** Spend time outside, even if only for 10 minutes. Fresh air and nature have proven stress-reducing effects.
- **Gratitude Journal:** Write down three things you're before going to sleep at night to reset your mindset.

Quick Tip:

- Take a walk outside after meals to reduce stress and enhance digestion.
-

Hack #3: Sleep Well for Optimal Brain Function

Why It Works:

Sleep is non-negotiable for brain health. During sleep, your brain consolidates memories, regenerates cells, and removes toxins—critical processes for maintaining cognitive clarity and emotional balance. Lack of sleep impacts your mood, memory, and decision-making, making it harder to stay sharp and energized during the holidays.

The Action:

Prioritize your sleep with a consistent sleep schedule and a calming bedtime routine:

- Aim for **7-9 hours of sleep** per night.
- Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- Avoid screens at least an hour before bed to ensure restorative sleep.

Quick Tip:

Enjoy calming herbal tea (like chamomile or lavender) before bed to promote relaxation.

Hack #4: Fiber-Rich Foods for Brain Clarity and Digestive Health

Why It Works:

Fiber-rich foods support healthy digestion, regulate blood sugar, and clear up brain fog. When digestion is sluggish, your body has a harder time absorbing nutrients, leading to low energy and poor focus. Eating more fiber keeps your gut healthy and your mind sharp, stay energized, focused, and feeling your best all day.

The Action:

Load up on fiber at every meal:

- Include **leafy greens** (spinach, kale), **cruciferous vegetables** (broccoli, cauliflower), and **fiber-packed seeds** (chia, flax).
- Enjoy **avocados**, **nuts**, and **berries** to boost fiber intake.
- Aim for at least 5 servings of fiber per day to keep digestion smooth and blood sugar stable.

Quick Tip:

Add spinach or kale to your morning smoothie or omelet to jump-start your fiber intake.

Hack #5: Balance Your Blood Sugar for Consistent Energy

Why It Works:

Blood sugar fluctuations can cause energy slumps, cravings, and brain fog—especially during the holidays when sugary treats are abundant. Keeping your blood sugar stable by pairing protein, fiber, and healthy fats in *every* meal ensures a consistent energy supply to the brain, keeping you sharp and focused all day long.

The Action:

Stabilize your blood sugar by eating balanced meals:

- **Protein + Greens:** Include protein (eggs, chicken, tofu) and leafy greens (spinach, kale) at each meal.
- **Healthy Fats:** Incorporate healthy fats like avocado, nuts, and olive oil to keep you full and focused.
- **Limit Refined Sugars:** Avoid processed snacks and sugary treats that cause blood sugar spikes and crashes.

Quick Tip:

Have a protein-based snack (like a boiled egg or a handful of nuts) before indulging in sweets or alcohol to help stabilize your blood sugar.

Hack #6: Move Your Body for Mental and Physical Flow

Why It Works:

Exercise benefits your brain just as much as it does your body. Physical activity boosts blood flow to the brain, releases endorphins (your body's natural mood lifters), and improves memory and cognitive function. Whether it's walking, strength training, or yoga, regular movement is essential for both mental clarity and physical well-being.

The Action:

Make movement part of your daily routine:

- **Take the stairs** instead of the elevator.
- **Walk more:** Park further away from the store entrance. Take short walks after meals to keep your mind sharp and digestion flowing.

Quick Tip:

Take a 5-minute stretch break every 90 minutes to boost circulation and keep your mind and body energized.

Your 5-Minute Daily Action Plan for a Glowing Holiday

1. **Hydrate First Thing:** Drink water with apple cider vinegar, or lemon + sea salt to detoxify and boost metabolism.
 2. **Add Fiber:** Include fiber-rich foods like leafy greens, berries, and seeds in every meal for better digestion and steady energy.
 3. **Manage Stress:** Practice mindful breathing and spend time outdoors to build stress resilience.
 4. **Stabilize Blood Sugar:** Eat regular meals with protein and greens to keep energy levels steady.
 5. **Move More:** Take regular movement breaks to enhance circulation and keep your brain and body in top shape.
 6. **Prioritize Sleep:** Stick to a consistent sleep schedule and a bedtime routine for restorative sleep.
-

Take Care of You This Holiday Season

The holidays don't have to mean weight gain, fatigue, and stress. Follow these 6 simple tips to **glow**, not **grow**—staying energized, balanced, and in control all season. No more starting the New Year sluggish, bloated, or burnt out. This is your time to shine! You've got this!