

## Brain Food

(With dementia and neurodegenerative conditions on the rise, it is important for readers to understand how important it is for them to keep moving. Our central nervous system is like a garden which needs feeding in order to flourish.)

Spoiler alert – This is not about what you had for breakfast!

You are what you eat, no doubt. But it is equally true that you are what you feel.

Your brain needs more than food of the chewable type - it also requires the nourishment of a constant flow of sensory information.

Sights and smells, sounds and tastes, touch and pain - these are sensations we are most aware of. They inform us of the world outside our bodies but what of the world inside?

From the ligaments binding the small bones of your toes to the muscles and tendons of your forearms and the joint capsules of your hips and spine - millions of sensory nerves ceaselessly and silently tell your brain where they are and what they're doing.

Picture yourself walking down a shady path through the woods – you are enjoying the dappled sunshine and the cool breeze and the scent of wild roses in bloom.. All the while your internal sensory system is quietly informing your brain of the moment to moment details of your gait so that you don't need to consciously think about which way your left foot is moving or what to do next with your arms.

We take this magnificently complex system of sensory input for granted but we cannot survive without it. If an infant is fed but denied human contact they fail to thrive and simply waste away. When an elderly person is bedridden with a broken hip and they lay there , medicated and motionless, their mind begins to break down. Confusion and memory loss and depression set in as their brain starves for sensory stimulation.

When it comes to nourishment of the sensory kind you needn't worry about overeating- the more the better, both in amount and variety.

Keep yourself moving and keep it interesting - bathe your brain in a flood of constantly changing sensations and you will be nourishing the very core of what makes you – you.

Submitted by Dr.Dawn Armstrong, DC

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