The Key To A Child's Healthy Brain Development: Foods To Eat And Avoid

Children's brain develops rapidly and a good diet help with their healthy growth. Make a note of these diet tips

Fareesa Fatima | Updated: October 24, 2023 19:09 IST

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Children's brains need ample nutrition.

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Highlights

- Children's brains grow as their bodies grow.
- A good diet helps with healthy development of the brain.
- Expert suggests foods to include and avoid in children's diet.

Children's brain keeps growing from ages 6 to 12. Children who are malnourished are not just fussy eaters but are truly deprived of adequate calories and protein in their diet. Throughout this period children with good nutrition grow well both physically and mentally. They get better at thinking, remembering, and focusing. Their brains are good at absorbing and learning new things. A well-balanced diet with essential nutrients helps brains develop well. So what are these essential nutrients?

Here Are 5 Essential Nutrients For Children's Brain Development

1. Omega-3 Fatty Acids

Omega-3 fatty acids are associated with better cognitive function, including improved memory, attention and problem-solving skills. It is advisable to include fatty fish (like salmon, mackerel and tuna), flaxseeds, sunflower seeds, pumpkin seeds and walnuts in the child's diet.

2. Iron

Iron is vital for cognitive development, as it helps children stay active and focused. Include iron-rich foods like lean meats, fortified cereals, green leafy vegetables and beans like Kidney Beans (Rajma), Black Eyed Peas (Lobia), Green Peas, and Chickpeas in their diet.

3. Antioxidants

These are found in colourful fruits and vegetables, such as beetroot, carrots, tomatoes, plums, berries, and spinach. Antioxidants support overall brain health.

4. Healthy breakfast

Encourage your child to eat a healthy breakfast every day. A well-balanced morning meal provides the necessary energy and nutrients to start the day, enhancing focus and concentration in school.

5. Hydration

Ensure your child drinks water throughout the day, as even mild dehydration can impair intellectual performance.

Also Read: Following MIND Diet May Reduce Risk Of Cognitive Impairment And Dementia: Study

Children need good nutrition for healthy brain development.
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Foods To Avoid In Children's Diet:

Excessive sugars like candies, lollies, chocolates, and processed foods like pizza, burgers, cookies, and noodles made from refined flour may lead to energy spikes and crashes, which can negatively affect concentration and mood. Their consumption should be minimised.

Apart from the key nutrients listed above quality sleep, regular physical activity that supports brain growth and learning, brain-stimulating activities like reading, puzzles, board games, art and creativity, music, and nature exploration can help enhance intellectual skills. Remember, that every child is unique, and their nutritional needs may vary. It is advisable to consult with a paediatrician or a registered dietitian for personalised guidance on your child's nutrition and cognitive development.

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