

Brain FOOD

Annette Lang provides some tips to boost your child's brain power

The brain is a hungry organ! It requires double the amount of energy to function well throughout the day, especially for children. Feeding your child's brain is one of the most important things you can do. It helps keep them alert, especially during the schooling years, and it will also play a part later in life by helping to reduce stress levels.

Keeping the brain hydrated is also crucial. In Singapore's climate, ensuring your child drinks enough during the day can sometimes be difficult. Let them choose a fun water bottle to take to school. This makes drinking water more enjoyable and you can play games with your kids about how many full bottles they can drink. Start an incentive programme with them too to encourage them to stay hydrated, but stay away from soft drinks as this can have a reverse effect.

Feed your child's brain...

by including oily fish in their diet. This is one of the easiest and most effective ways as the omega-3 fatty acids present in oily fish such as salmon helps brain function, and builds grey matter and cell membranes.

The following recipe is great "brain food" for your children as not only does the recipe include salmon, it also contains avocados which are also known to help the brain. You can also "sneak" extra veggies into these patties to ensure your children are eating enough vegetables; and they'll love them!



Salmon Patties with Avocado Salsa

INGREDIENTS

- 600g potatoes, peeled, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 185g (1 cup) fresh corn kernels (approx. 2 corn cobs)
- 4 shallots, finely chopped
- 400g fresh salmon, steamed or poached and flaked
- 1 egg, lightly whisked
- 1 cup panko crumbs
- 1 tsp dill or thyme, finely chopped

Avocado, Tomato & Cucumber Salsa

- 1 small avocado, halved, stone removed, peeled, finely chopped
- 1 large tomato, halved, deseeded, finely chopped
- 1 Japanese cucumber, finely chopped
- ½ bell pepper (red, orange or yellow), finely chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh coriander (Chinese parsley) or spring onion, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh calamansi juice
- 1 tsp olive oil
- Kosher or sea salt and fresh ground pepper to taste

METHOD

1. Boil or steam the potatoes until tender. Transfer to a large bowl. Use a potato masher to mash until smooth.
2. Heat two teaspoons of oil in a large non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook, stirring occasionally, for a few minutes or until softened. Remove from heat and allow to cool.
3. Meanwhile steam or poach salmon and flake into chunks, then place in medium bowl. Add the corn, egg, and ready mashed

potatoes. Season with salt and pepper. Stir until well combined. Divide the mixture into eight equal portions. Shape each portion into a 2cm-thick patty.

4. Place the panko crumbs on a plate and stir in the dill or thyme. Add one patty to the breadcrumbs and press firmly to coat. Transfer to a large plate. Repeat with remaining patties and panko. Cover and place in the fridge for 30 minutes to chill.
5. Wipe the frying pan clean with paper towel. Heat the remaining oil in the pan over medium-high heat. Add half the patties and cook for three minutes each side or until golden. Transfer to a plate lined with a paper towel. Repeat with remaining patties.
6. To make the salsa, place the avocado, tomato, cucumber, bell pepper coriander (or spring onions), lime juice and oil in a small bowl and gently toss until just combined. Season with salt and pepper.
7. Divide the patties among serving plates. Top with salad leaves. Spoon over the salsa.

COOK'S NOTES & TIPS:

- To freeze: At the end of step 4, set patties aside to cool completely. Wrap the patties individually in freezer paper or plastic wrap. Place in sealable freezer bags or an airtight container. Label, date and freeze for up to three months.
- Patties can also be sprayed with cooking oil and placed in a 200°C oven and baked until golden brown, turning once during cooking.
- To make this for adults, serve with garlic aioli.

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