



NEURO PLAN PLAYBOOK

The Essential Science-Backed Lifestyle and Nutrition
Framework for Optimal Brain Health



DEVELOPED BY WORLD-RENOWNED BRAIN HEALTH EXPERTS

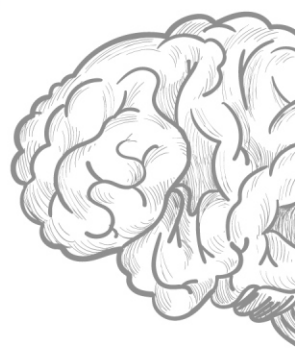
Drs. Dean and Ayesha Sherzai



This Is A *Must* Read

Please read this important message prior to reading this Guide. This Guide and all of its materials are for educational and informational purposes only and solely as a self-help tool for your own use. We are not providing direct medical or nutrition-therapy advice. You should not use this information to diagnose or treat any health problems or illnesses without consulting your own medical practitioner. Always seek the advice of your own medical practitioner about your specific health situation.

Your download of this Guide in no way makes Drs. Dean and/or Ayesha Sherzai your medical doctors and in no way are Drs. Sherzai giving you direct medical advice at any time.





Welcome!

We're Drs. Dean and Ayesha Sherzai.

We are practicing neurologists, scientists, authors, parents, and a husband-and-wife duo who know the value of healthy lifestyle choices.

We've seen the impact that our NEURO Plan framework has had in making sick people healthy and in taking healthy people to the next level.

We met as young physicians, and in our first conversation we learned that both of our grandparents had spent their last days on Earth suffering from dementia. It was then that we vowed to do whatever we could to help others avoid this fate by building healthy minds and bodies.

Our academic journey led us to conduct research, treat patients, and serve as professors at Georgetown University, Columbia University, the National Institutes of Health, Cedar-Sinai, and Loma Linda University, where we serve as the co-directors of The Brain Health and Alzheimer's Prevention Program.

We've worked with devastatingly disease-ridden populations and we've worked with some of the healthiest people in the world; the Loma Linda Seventh Day Adventist population which is a Blue Zone community (defined by living measurably longer and healthier lives due to optimal nutrition, exercise, stress management, and social support).

This NEURO Plan Playbook teaches you the fundamentals of our NEURO Plan framework—a science-based program backed by years of research with thousands of patients. It is broken down into:

N

Nutrition

E

Exercise

U

Unwinding

R

Restorative
Sleep

O

Optimization

These are five pivotal factors that can drastically affect your mind's health. That's good to know—but even better, the NEURO Plan is a program you can follow to keep all five healthy for the rest of your life.

Here's to your health,

Dean & Ayesha Sherzai



Table of Contents

N: Nutrition	06
E: Exercise	12
U: Unwind	13
R: Restore	14
O: Optimize	16
Mind-Kind Recipes	17
▶ Golden Waffles with Strawberry Sauce	18
▶ Berry Whole Grain Smoothie Bowl	20
▶ Sweet Potato Bean Burger	22
▶ Greens and Grains Power Bowl	24
▶ Eggplant Rollatini with Tofu Ricotta, Tomato Basil Sauce & Cashew Cream	26
▶ Lemony Brussels Sprouts with Walnuts	29
▶ Acorn Squash Bake with Romesco Sauce	31





Nutrition

Nutrition is a very important element of brain health. In fact, food is the single greatest tool we have for building better brain health.

Evidence shows that a diet HIGH in plant-based foods and LOW in ultra-processed foods, saturated fats, trans fats, salt, and refined carbohydrates can lower the risk of Alzheimer’s and vascular dementia.



The NEURO 9

These nine foods are crucial for maintaining and improving your cognitive health, and you should eat them every single day. The suggested serving size is the minimum intake you should be getting when following the NEURO Plan.

Green Leafy Vegetables	Especially dark green leafy vegetables like kale, watercress, Swiss chard, collard greens, arugula, spinach	3 cups raw or 1.5 cooked
Whole Grains	Such as oats, quinoa, brown rice, farro, buckwheat	3 servings (½ cup cooked oatmeal, quinoa, brown rice, or 100% whole wheat pasta is 1 serving)
Seeds	Especially ground flaxseeds and chia seeds	2 Tablespoons (2 servings)
Beans and Legumes	Chickpeas, black beans, pinto beans, lentils, edamame, giant beans, tempeh, tofu	3 servings of ½ cup cooked beans or tofu/tempeh, ¼ cup hummus, or ½ cup peas
Berries	Such as blueberries, blackberries, strawberries	½ cup (1 serving)
Nuts	Such as walnuts, almonds, cashews	¼ cup (1 serving)
Crucifers	Such as broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy, cabbage, brussels sprouts	1 cup (2 servings)
Tea	Green, white, black, Oolong	At least 1 cup daily
Herbs and Spices	Especially turmeric, but also sumac, sage, rosemary, thyme, oregano, cloves, Indian gooseberry, saffron	At least ¼ teaspoon daily

The Thoughtful Twenty

These are brain-nourishing foods that are an extension of the NEURO 9, and is an expanded list of foods that should be part of your brain-healthy menu. This is not a rigid list of foods to adhere to. Rather, it provides options that should become part of your dietary pattern as you build out the foundations of your diet.

01 Leafy Greens

Greens contain a ton of antioxidants, folic acid, vitamin E, and beta carotene, all nutrients that support brain health.



02 Broccoli

Contains sulforaphane, an antioxidant that can cross the blood-brain barrier and reverse damage caused by free radicals.



03 Blueberries

Highly anti-inflammatory



04 Mushrooms

Improve immune function and contain polyphenols, which are natural antioxidants that prevent cellular damage. Great source of B vitamins, which have been shown to lower the risk of developing Alzheimer's.



05 Beets

Contain folate, manganese, and copper, which are essential for maintaining neural infrastructure.



06 Avocados

Packed with "good fats" that support brain structure.



07 Olives

Great source of polyunsaturated and mono-unsaturated fats.



08 Nuts, Especially Walnuts

Walnuts have high amounts of omega-3 fatty acids, as well as fiber and minerals. They have the highest antioxidants from all nuts.



09 Seeds

High in omega-3 fatty acids, protein, fiber, and minerals such as B vitamins, iron, and magnesium.



10 Beans and Legumes

Beans contain resistant starches, fiber, plant protein, antioxidants, phytonutrients, iron, and other minerals. They lower cholesterol and regulate blood sugar, and they've also been shown to increase longevity and reduce the risk of stroke.



11 Quinoa

The only seed that is a complete protein source, and also contains fiber, vitamin E, zinc, phosphorus, and selenium which are all essential for brain health.



12 Oats

A prebiotic and are an amazing source of a soluble fiber called beta-glucan. Also contains a form of antioxidants called avenanthramides. These antioxidants produce nitric oxide which helps lower blood pressure and increases blood flow to the small arteries of the brain.



13 Green Tea

Contains catechins, a polyphenol that activates toxin clearing enzymes. It is a potent anti-inflammatory.



14 Turmeric and Other Spices

Curcumin, found in turmeric, is an antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and anti-amyloid powerhouse. We recommend at least half a teaspoon of turmeric per day. Adding a pinch of black pepper increases bioavailability by 2,000%.



15 Cacao

Dark, unprocessed cocoa powder and cacao nibs are incredible sources of flavanol phytonutrients, which have been shown to relax arteries, allowing oxygen and other nutrients to reach the brain more easily.



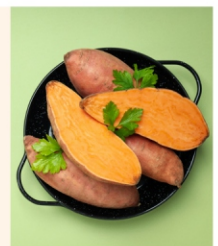
16 Herbs

Cilantro, dill, rosemary, thyme, oregano, basil, mint, and parsley each contain ten times the antioxidants of nuts and berries.



17 Sweet Potatoes

Like legumes, sweet potatoes are packed with phytonutrients, fiber, vitamins A and C, minerals and fiber that can regulate your blood sugar.



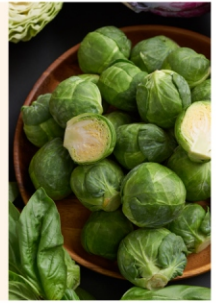
18 Soy

Soy contains isoflavones, which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. It also has the highest protein in any legume, and is high in iron and fiber. It has been shown to lower rates of cardiovascular disease by reducing LDL and cholesterol, which in turn means better neurovascular function.



19 Brussels Sprouts

High in fiber and contain a variety of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. They reduce inflammation, improve blood sugar control, lower cholesterol, and provide an immune boost – all of which benefit the brain.



20 Goji Berries

This fruit is available dried, and is an extremely effective anti-inflammatory. High in vitamins, goji berries also contain an antioxidant compound called zeaxanthin, which helps regulate blood sugar and has been shown to improve sleep and reduce anxiety and depression.



Examples of ultra-processed foods, saturated fats and trans fats that should be avoided or very limited include:

- Processed sugar
- White flour
- Packaged snacks/sweets
- Red meat
- Processed meats
- Cheeses high in saturated fats
- Butter
- Coconut oil

Additionally, alcohol is neurotoxic and its high use has been associated with increased risk of brain atrophy (shrinkage) and ultimately dementia.

Finally, be sure to drink plenty of water. Water helps regulate your body temperature, provides flow for the lymphatic and blood systems and, crucially for brain health, provides a cushion. A jogging person who is dehydrated can slam their brain against the surrounding bony structures without cushion; even small movements can cause microtraumas in the brain if you aren't properly hydrated.



Exercise

It's probably not surprising news that exercise is good for you! But it's not just good for cardiovascular health and mental health; exercising is also good for your brain health! Exercising regularly can create more connections between neurons and reduce risk for dementia.

Research studies show that people who have more muscle mass and who have better stamina have sharper brains. Exercise helps the various parts of the brain communicate with each other because it improves the integrity of the white-matter tracts of the brain. Resistance training, especially leg strength, builds muscle mass and can help reduce inflammation in the brain and grow more brain cell connections. Leg strength in particular helps to grow the brain. In fact, we say bigger legs equals bigger brains! Leg strength improves metabolism, promotes regular increased blood flow to the brain, and increases brain derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), which grows connections between neurons. This can reduce the risk of Alzheimer's dementia even later in life.

We recommend exercising between 150 to 300 minutes per week, dividing it into 3 or 4 exercise sessions per week. Reducing sedentary behavior is key.

Any type of exercise—including both aerobic and strength training—is good as long as you push yourself safely and stick to it. Even just a brisk walk and a few squats each day can lower your risk of Alzheimer's by 40 percent!



Unwind

There's good stress and there's bad stress. Bad stress is the kind that is uncontrolled and has you feeling constantly worried, affecting your sleep and blood pressure. This kind of stress has been associated with brain atrophy (shrinkage).

On the other hand, there is good stress. This is the kind you experience when you're challenging yourself with working toward a life goal or succeeding at a project.

People who have constant bad stress in their lives tend to have higher levels of adrenaline and cortisol in circulation, which has been associated with neurodegenerative changes in the brain. It affects the billions of connections between neurons, which in turn affects your concentration, attention, decision-making, judgment, and memory formation.

Stress management is very important for building a healthy brain. Increasing good stress (mental challenge and learning) and reducing bad stress (external stressors that are imposed upon you) are key to brain health and avoiding dementia.

Start by identifying bad stressors and reduce them where you can. Try practicing methods of relieving bad stress such as meditation, mindful breathing, listening to music, journaling, or any other activities that help you feel calm.



Restore

Restorative sleep is essential for optimal brain health. When we sleep, our brains are cleaned and our memories are encoded and organized. In our book *The 30-Day Alzheimer's Solution*, we say:

For the brain, sleep is a super spa. While you are sleeping, your brain enters a completely different metabolic processing state; in fact, your brain does some of its most impressive work during this time.

Sleep deprivation can increase the risk of Alzheimer's dementia. We need 7-8 hours of uninterrupted, deep, restorative sleep.

Here are 5 tips for better sleep:

01 **Establish a regular sleep schedule.**

Wake up at the same time and go to sleep at the same time. Your body likes routine, and this will help you fall asleep and wake up more easily.

02 Get one to two hours of natural light during the first half of the day.

Natural light exposure helps support your circadian rhythm, which is your body's innate 24-hour biological process. It does this by starting production of melatonin—your sleep hormone—so it's ready to release when the sun goes down.

03 Reduce the amount of light and sound in your bedroom at night.

This will signal to your body that it's time to start winding down and prepare for sleep.

04 Stop using electronic devices at least half an hour before sleep (an hour is even better).

The disruptive effects of blue light on our sleep cycle is well-documented at this point. Blue light has the effect of tricking your brain into thinking it's still daytime.

05 Don't eat at least 2-3 hours before bedtime.

It's not just *what* you eat; *when* you eat also has an impact on your brain health. Active digestion prevents restorative sleep, so be sure to give your body plenty of time for digestion after your last meal.





Optimize

The more you keep your mind active, the more resilient your brain will become!

This ties into a bit of what we talked about in the Unwind section: good stress has a positive impact on brain health. People who have complex and challenging jobs develop cognitive reserve and resilience that protects them from the manifestations of neurodegeneration.

Cognitive reserve is a measure of connectivity we develop in our brains throughout our lives. Cognitive reserve depends on how much we challenge our brains, how much information we take in—all the risk, adventure, joy, learning, and experience we accumulate over a lifetime.

Cognitive reserve is something that's entirely within your control. It's up to you to optimize your brain—and therefore protect it—by challenging it!

Engage in real-life activities that are not just 'connecting dots on a screen.' That means learning new skills, solving problems, volunteering, learning a new language, writing, taking an online class, painting, learning to play a musical instrument, learning a new dance, and other such activities.



Mind-Kind

Recipes

Whole-food, plant-based recipes for optimal brain health



Golden Waffles with Strawberry Sauce

From The 30-Day Alzheimer's Solution: The Definitive Food and Lifestyle Guide to Preventing Cognitive Decline

NEURO 9 ITEMS:

strawberries, cashews, chia seeds

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOKING TIME: 15 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 25 minutes

YIELD: 3 waffles



INGREDIENTS

FOR THE STRAWBERRY SAUCE

- 1 cup strawberries, sliced Juice and zest of 1 small lemon
- 2 tablespoons monk fruit sweetener (optional)
- 2 to 3 tablespoons water

FOR THE WAFFLES

- 2 tablespoons flaxseeds
- 3 tablespoons water
- 1 cup 100% whole-wheat flour
- 2/3 cup oat flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 2 tablespoons of arrowroot flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 1/4 cups unsweetened soy milk (as needed)
- Avocado oil spray

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add strawberries, lemon juice, lemon zest, sweetener (if desired), and water to a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat. Cover partially, reduce the heat, and let simmer for about 10 to 12 minutes, or until the strawberries are very tender. Stir the mixture occasionally and add a splash of water if it becomes too thick. If you wish, purée using an immersion blender. Set aside.
2. Meanwhile, preheat a waffle iron to medium-high.
3. Mix flax seeds with water in a small bowl and set aside.
4. Combine the whole-wheat flour, oat flour, baking powder, turmeric, arrowroot flour, and salt in a large bowl.
5. Gently stir in the applesauce, apple cider vinegar, flaxseed mixture, and enough soy milk to get a thick batter. Do not overmix.
6. Spray the waffle iron with avocado oil cooking spray and pour about ½ cup batter in the center and cook until golden brown, following the manufacturer's instructions.
7. Keep warm while you make the remaining waffles.
8. Serve with the strawberry sauce and any other desired toppings.

Recipe Notes

- ▶ Freeze the waffles for up to one month.
- ▶ Refrigerate any leftover strawberry sauce in a sealed container for up to one week.
- ▶ Serve with fresh fruit, nut butters, or cashew cream, or with your choice of savory toppings.

Berry Whole Grain Smoothie Bowl

From *The 30-Day Alzheimer's Solution: The Definitive Food and Lifestyle Guide to Preventing Cognitive Decline*

NEURO 9 ITEMS:

quinoa, buckwheat, berries, kale, flaxseeds, cashew butter, spices

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOKING TIME: none

TOTAL TIME: 10 minutes

YIELD: 3 servings

INGREDIENTS

- ▶ 1/3 cup cooked quinoa
- ▶ 1/3 cup cooked buckwheat
- ▶ 2 cups unsweetened cashew milk or other plant-based milk
- ▶ 2 cups fresh or frozen blackberries
- ▶ 1 ripe avocado, pitted and skinned
- ▶ 2 cups spinach or baby kale
- ▶ 1 teaspoon flax seeds
- ▶ 2 tablespoons unsalted cashew butter or other nut butter
- ▶ 1/4 teaspoon cardamom
- ▶ Monk fruit sweetener to taste (optional)
- ▶ A cup of ice cubes (optional)

FOR SERVING

- ▶ 1/3 cup fresh blackberries
- ▶ 3 tablespoons chopped cashews or other nuts of choice

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Combine quinoa, buckwheat, and cashew milk in a blender and blend at high speed until smooth.
2. Add blackberries, avocado, spinach, flax seeds, cashew butter, cardamom, and monk fruit sweetener, if using. You may also add a handful of ice cubes. Blend until smooth. Adjust the consistency to taste with extra milk or water.

Divide the smoothie among three serving bowls and top with blackberries and chopped cashews. Serve immediately.

Sweet Potato Bean Burger

From The 30-Day Alzheimer's Solution: The Definitive Food and Lifestyle Guide to Preventing Cognitive Decline

NEURO 9 ITEMS:

flaxseeds, oats, black beans, herbs and spices

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOKING TIME: 30 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 45 minutes

YIELD: 4 servings



INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium sweet potatoes
- 1 tablespoon ground flaxseeds
- 3 tablespoons water
- Zest and juice of 1 lime
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon smoked paprika
- 1 small red onion, finely chopped
- 1 jalapeño, seeds and pith removed, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 tablespoon chipotle adobo sauce (not the pepper)
- ⅔ cup rolled oats
- 1 cup canned no salt added black beans, rinsed and drained
- 4 tablespoons chopped cilantro
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- Oat flour or cornmeal, to dust

OPTIONAL GARNISHES

- ▶ Tomatoes, sliced
- ▶ Avocado, sliced
- ▶ Pickles, sliced

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Pierce the sweet potatoes with a fork and microwave on high until tender (7 to 10 minutes), turning over halfway. Scoop out the flesh, mash roughly, and set aside to cool. Alternatively, steam or roast the sweet potatoes.
2. Mix flax seeds with the water in a small bowl and let the mixture thicken, 4 to 5 minutes.
3. Place lime zest and juice, cumin, paprika, onion, jalapeño, garlic, chipotle sauce, and oats in a food processor and pulse until ingredients begin to come together. Add black beans and cilantro, season to taste, and pulse a few times to incorporate.
4. Transfer the mixture to a mixing bowl and shape into four patties with wet hands, as mixture will be sticky. Dust the patties with some oat flour and place in the freezer for 10 to 15 minutes.
5. Preheat the oven to 400°F and line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat. Arrange the chilled patties on the prepared baking sheet and bake for about 15 minutes, then flip over and continue baking for another 5 minutes.

Recipe Notes

- ▶ Serve on a sprouted whole-wheat bun or on a bed of greens
- ▶ For some crunch, add 2 to 3 tablespoons soaked sunflower seeds to the burger mixture.

Greens and Grains Power Bowl

From The 30-Day Alzheimer's Solution: The Definitive Food and Lifestyle Guide to Preventing Cognitive Decline

NEURO 9 ITEMS:

quinoa, broccoli rabe, peas, almonds, herbs

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

COOKING TIME: 5 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 20 minutes

YIELD: 3 servings

INGREDIENTS

- ▶ ¼ cup water
- ▶ 1 bunch (about 1 pound) of broccoli rabe, trimmed, cut into bite-size pieces, and steamed (or use 1 pound broccoli florets)
- ▶ 6 stalks asparagus, trimmed and cut into bite-sized pieces, and steamed
- ▶ 1 cup cooked peas (if using frozen, steam first)
- ▶ 1 ½ cups cooked quinoa
- ▶ ⅓ cup chopped mixed fresh herbs (mint, dill, and flat-leaf parsley work well)
- ▶ 1 ripe avocado, sliced
- ▶ ¼ cup toasted slivered almonds

FOR THE DRESSING

- ▶ 5 tablespoons unsalted almond butter
- ▶ ¼ teaspoon each of ground ginger and red pepper flakes
- ▶ Juice of 1 large orange
- ▶ Pinch of salt and pepper, to taste

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place a pan over medium-high heat and add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water and then add the broccoli rabe, asparagus, and peas. Cover with a lid and steam for about 5 minutes. Remove lid and let water evaporate.
2. For the dressing, whisk together the almond butter, ground ginger, pepper flakes, and orange juice in a small bowl until smooth; season to taste.
3. Combine quinoa and herbs in a bowl and toss with half of the dressing. Divide equally among three bowls and top with broccoli rabe, asparagus, peas, and avocado.
4. Drizzle remaining dressing on top, sprinkle with almonds, and serve.

Eggplant Rollatini with Tofu Ricotta, Tomato Basil Sauce & Cashew Cream

SERVES: 6

Keeps in the fridge for several days, not freezer friendly

This recipe may appear challenging at first glance, as there are many steps involved in preparing ingredients. We assure you that each step is simple and well worth the effort!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 medium eggplants, sliced lengthwise

TOFU RICOTTA FILLING

- 1 block of extra firm tofu
- Juice of 2 large lemons
- 2 Tbsp nutritional yeast
- ½ cup fresh basil
- 1 Tbsp dried oregano
- Freshly ground black pepper
- A pinch of salt (optional)
- ¼ cup walnut parmesan (recipe below)

CASHEW CREAM

- ½ cup cashews, soaked for at least 4 hours or overnight
- ½ cup soy milk
- ¼ tsp garlic
- ½ tsp miso paste
- ½ Tbsp nutritional yeast

TOMATO BASIL SAUCE

- ▶ Extra virgin olive oil spray (optional)
- ▶ 4-6 cloves garlic, minced
- ▶ 1 28-ounce can (or two 15 oz cans) of tomato sauce or crushed tomatoes, NOT diced tomatoes. You can also get whole tomatoes and process them.
- ▶ 1 Tbsp dried oregano
- ▶ ½ cup basil leaves, chopped plus more for garnish
- ▶ A pinch of salt, optional
- ▶ Freshly ground black pepper

WALNUT PARMESAN

This recipe yields 10-12 servings and can be stored in a small jar in the fridge for weeks.

- ▶ ½ cup raw walnuts (or any other nuts)
- ▶ 2 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- ▶ ⅛ tsp salt
- ▶ ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- ▶ ½ tsp miso paste (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 C).
2. Arrange the eggplant slices on 1-2 baking sheets in an even layer and bake in oven for 20 minutes, then flip and bake for another 10 minutes. Set aside and maintain heat at 375 degrees F (190 C).
3. While eggplant is baking, add all the walnut parmesan ingredients in a food processor and pulse a few times. You want a coarse meal, not a powder. Pour the parmesan out of the processor container and set aside.
4. Now add the tofu ricotta ingredients to the food processor and pulse to combine, scraping down sides as needed. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed.
5. Make the cashew sauce by blending all the ingredients in a blender and food processor. Set aside.

6. Now make the tomato basil sauce: place the garlic in a pan on medium heat, sprayed with extra virgin olive oil or avocado oil and let it become fragrant for about 30 seconds. Then add the tomato sauce, oregano, black pepper, basil, and salt (optional). Mix and place on very low heat for about 15 minutes so the flavors get to mix with each other. Set aside.
7. Pour about a cup of the tomato sauce into an 8×8 baking dish (or similar sized dish) and reserve the rest of the sauce for topping and serving. Set aside.
8. Scoop generous amounts (about 2 Tbsp) of tofu ricotta filling onto each eggplant slice and roll up. Place seam side down in the sauce-lined baking dish. Continue until all filling and noodles or eggplant strips are used up. Pour more tomato sauce on the rolls for extra flavor. Drizzle or spoon over some cashew sauce on top in a zig zag pattern.
9. Bake for 20 minutes or until sauce is bubbly and warm and the top of the rolls are very slightly golden. Serve immediately with additional drizzle of the cashew sauce, walnut parmesan, and fresh basil.

Leftovers keep for a couple of days,

Recipe Notes

- You can avoid oil and skip the salt.
- If you don't like eggplant, you can use pasta shells instead, but try to find whole wheat pasta. You could also cook this with whole wheat penne pasta, mixing the ricotta with the pasta and covering it with the tomato sauce and cashew cream.
- If you can't have cashews, use $\frac{3}{4}$ cup silken tofu to make the cream and add a tiny bit more nutritional yeast for taste.
- If you can't have walnuts, substitute with sunflower or pumpkin seeds.
- If you can't have tofu, mix the eggplant slices with white beans and steamed spinach, and cover it with the tomato sauce and cashew cream.

Lemony Brussels Sprouts with Walnuts

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

COOKING TIME: 15 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 25 minutes

YIELD: 6 servings

Nutritious Brussels sprouts can be cooked in many delicious ways and are a must-have addition to the holiday table and beyond. To help them cook evenly, cut in half lengthwise or if large, cut into quarters before proceeding with the recipe.

INGREDIENTS

- 1lb/450g Brussels sprouts, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, divided
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup walnuts or pecans, coarsely chopped
- 3 tablespoons nutritional yeast
- Zest and juice of 1 lemon
- 1 teaspoon whole grain Dijon mustard

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Bring a large saucepan of salted water to a boil over a medium-high heat; add the sprouts and cook for about 3 minutes. Drain and plunge them in ice water for 20 to 30 seconds, then drain and set aside.

2. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook until they begin to caramelize, about 5 minutes. Stir in the garlic and walnuts and continue cooking for 2 to 3 minutes until the walnuts are golden brown. Stir in the nutritional yeast and lemon zest and set aside.
3. Heat the remaining tablespoon of olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the sprouts and cook, stirring often and drizzling with a tablespoon of lemon juice at a time, for about 7 to 10 minutes or until slightly caramelized. Stir in the mustard and any remaining lemon juice.
4. Season the sprouts to taste, transfer to a serving plate, and scatter the pecan mixture on top. Serve immediately.

Acorn Squash Bake with Romesco Sauce

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

COOKING TIME: 35 minutes

TOTAL TIME: 55 minutes

YIELD: 4 servings as a side, 2 servings as a main dish

INGREDIENTS

- 4 red bell peppers
- 1 cup almonds
- 5 whole cloves of garlic with skin on
- 2 tablespoons apple cider
- 1 tablespoon EVOO
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- ½ tsp sea salt
- 4 teaspoon monkfruit sweetener (or erythritol)
- 2 teaspoons harissa paste (or chili garlic sauce), add more to taste

SQUASH

- 1 acorn squash, seeds removed, sliced into 1/4- inch rounds
- 1 tablespoon harissa paste or 2-3 tsp chili garlic sauce
- 1 tablespoon EVOO
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon monkfruit
- Pinch sea salt
- 1/3 cup roasted hazelnuts, chopped
- Fresh mint

INSTRUCTIONS

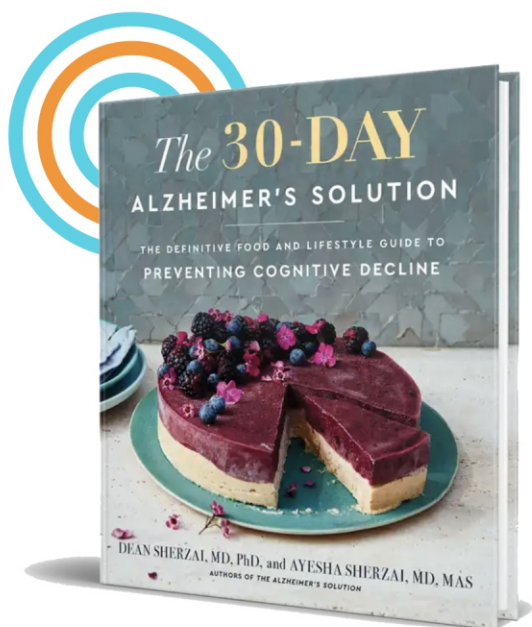
1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Cover a baking sheet with parchment paper. Arrange the whole red peppers on one end of the clean baking sheet. On the other end of the baking sheet, arrange almonds and garlic (still in skin).
2. Place baking sheet in oven and roast almonds for 6-7 minutes (or until light golden brown; make sure they don't burn), then remove from pan and set aside. Flip garlic and bake for another 8 minutes or until golden-brown and slightly caramelized. Then remove and set aside.
3. Allow red peppers to roast until skin is bubbled and mostly blackened, flipping halfway through to char both sides. Once charred, wrap roasted red peppers in foil or parchment paper to steam. Set aside.
4. Line the baking sheet you just used with parchment paper or foil.
5. In a small mixing bowl, mix together remaining harissa paste, chili garlic sauce, monk fruit, and sea salt. Arrange sliced acorn squash on baking sheet and brush both sides generously with the harissa mixture. Sprinkle with a bit more sea salt and then roast for a total of 20 minutes, flipping at the 10-minute mark to ensure even cooking.
6. In the meantime, peel away the skin, seeds, and core from the red peppers. Also, remove skin from garlic. Add peeled peppers, almonds, garlic, vinegar, paprika, sea salt, monk fruit, and harissa to a blender or food processor. Puree until smooth, scraping down sides as needed.
7. Taste and adjust seasonings as desired.
8. To serve, add a generous amount of Romesco to a serving dish and top with squash. Drizzle on more sauce and garnish with hazelnuts, pomegranate, and mint.

Your Next Steps for Improving Your Brain Health and Preventing Cognitive Decline

We have no doubt you will find our NEURO Plan framework impactful as you begin to implement it into your life. The NEURO Plan is proven to help prevent Alzheimer's disease and dementia and is a direct result of our research. We certainly don't believe in reductionism, but in this guide, you'll discover that the steps necessary to prevent cognitive decline are fairly simple (and delicious!).

Here are more ways you can **stay connected with us** and learn more about brain-healthy living tips, research, and recipes.

Our Books



The 30-Day Alzheimer's Solution

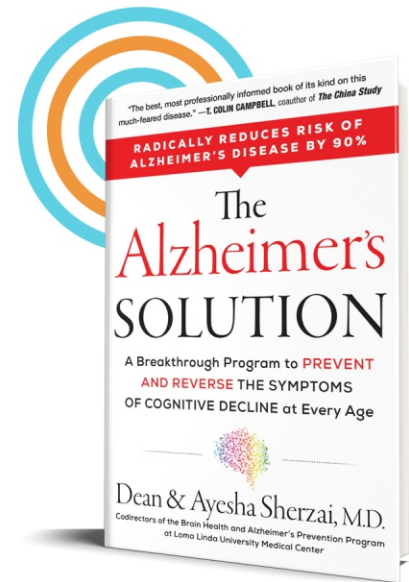
The Definitive Food and Lifestyle Guide to Preventing Cognitive Decline

This 30-day plan provides you with specific nutrition and lifestyle guidelines, including 75+ mind-kind recipes. It's entirely based on our NEURO Plan and shows you exactly how to implement it into your life. This is the first research-based, doctor-approved program for preventing Alzheimer's disease.

The Alzheimer's Solution

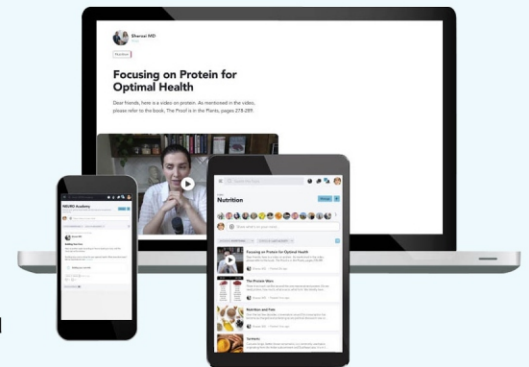
A Breakthrough Program to Prevent and Reverse the Symptoms of Cognitive Decline at Every Age

Learn the research behind the NEURO Plan, and learn how to evaluate your risk for developing brain disease and how to develop a personalized plan for optimizing cognitive function.









NEURO Academy

Our membership community is designed to optimize your brain health. Members enjoy on-demand courses on sleep, exercise, nutrition, and lifestyle. Each course delivers science-based insights on how to keep your mind sharp with lifestyle changes. Membership also gives you access to weekly cooking lessons and monthly coaching calls where you will be able to ask Drs. Sherzai questions.



LEARN MORE HERE

Connect With Us On Social

-  www.instagram.com/thebraindocs
-  www.facebook.com/TheBrainDocs
-  www.youtube.com/thebraindocs
-  www.tiktok.com/@thebraindocs
-  www.twitter.com/thebraindocs
-  www.threads.com/thebraindocs

